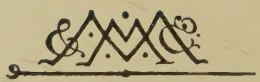
Campus Crusade for Christ Library

Reginald Newcombe
(from C.S.H.S)

on his marriage
April. 30. 19.

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH: THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS



MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
LONDON · BOMBAY · CALCUTTA
MELBOURNE

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
NEW YORK · BOSTON · CHICAGO
DALLAS · SAN FRANCISCO

THE MACMILLAN CO. OF CANADA, LTD.
TORONTO

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH: THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

A STUDY IN THE APOSTLES' CREED

BY

HENRY BARCLAY SWETE

D.D., D.LITT., F.B.A.

EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
HON. CANON OF ELY; HON. CHAPLAIN TO THE KING

ἓν σῶμα καὶ ἓν πνεῦμα.
ἐὰν ἐν τῷ φωτὶ περιπατῶμεν, ὡς αὐτός ἐστιν
ἐν τῷ φωτί, κοινωνίαν ἔχομεν μετ' ἀλλήλων.

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON
1916

COPYRIGHT.

First Edition 1915.
Reprinted 1916 (twice).

GLASGOW: PRINTED AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
BY ROBERT MACLEHOSE AND CO. LTD.

Campus Crusade for Christ Library

BT
45
.175

ECCLESIAE ANGLICANAE
MATRI CARISSIMAE

11477

FOREWORD

THIS book contains the substance of courses of lectures given at Cambridge in 1913-14 to classes consisting chiefly of candidates for the ministry of the Church of England.

There are few questions of more practical importance to Christian people, whether clergy or laity, than those which are raised by a study of the character, the work, and the functions of the Catholic Church. Upon the answer which we give to those questions depends our attitude, as individuals, towards the great society of which we are members. It determines for each of us whether he shall march in the war against sin and unbelief as a soldier in the army of Christ, under the command of its officers, conscious of the honour and the joy of serving in the ranks of a trained and disciplined force; or as an irresponsible adventurer, brave and loyal at heart, but a member of an irregular company, which follows no leaders but such as are chosen by itself.

The Communion of Saints, to which the second part of this study is devoted, stands first among the

four privileges which the Baptismal Creed of the West connects with loyal membership in the Holy Catholic Church. It is perhaps less tangible, and sometimes appeals less readily to the imagination than the other three; the Forgiveness of sins, the Resurrection of the body, and the Life everlasting awaken in the mind and spirit a response more immediate and more distinct than the privilege of fellowship with the other members of the Body of Christ. Moreover, circumstances have led to a weakening among English Churchmen of the sense of communion with our fellow-Christians. The abandonment of public prayers for the faithful departed, however necessary or expedient that step may have been, could not but tend to lessen the hold of our people upon the oneness in Christ of the living and the dead; while our present separation from the other historical churches of Christendom has shut the eyes of many to the essential unity of the Catholic Church.

The purpose of these pages will be answered if they help to revive in any reader a practical faith in the great article of the Creed to which they relate.

CAMBRIDGE, *July*, 1915.

CONTENTS

I. THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH

i. The Church and its Notes

	PAGE
'Church' in the New Testament	1
The Unity of the Church	11
Its Holiness	23
Its Catholicity	33
Its Apostolicity	41
Its Visibility	50
Its Indefectibility	55

ii. The Church in its Life, Order, and Functions

The Life of the Church	64
Its Order	73
Its Priesthood	85
Its Work	93
Its Teaching	106
Its Authority	111

iii. The Church in its Relations

To the Individual	119
To the Churches	126
To the World	131
To the Future Life	140

II. THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

PAGE

i. MEANING AND HISTORY OF THE PHRASE

In Holy Scripture - - - - - - 145
In early Church writers - - - - - 152
In the Western Creed - - - - - - 157

ii. THE COMMUNION OF THE SAINTS WITH GOD

With the Father - - - - - - - 170
With the Son - - - - - - - 174
With the Holy Spirit - - - - - - 181

iii. THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS IN THE CHURCH MILITANT

In the Sacraments - - - - - - 186
In the Spiritual Life - - - - - - 192
In Visible Fellowship - - - - - - 198

iv. THE COMMUNION OF LIVING SAINTS WITH THE DEPARTED

Condition of the Faithful Departed - - - 210
Interchange of Prayer - - - - - 220
Invocation of Saints - - - - - - 230

v. THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS IN THE LIFE TO COME

In the Intermediate State - - - - - 245
In the Risen Life - - - - - - - 252

ADDITIONAL NOTES

(*A*) On Belief in the Church - - - - 259
(*B*) On the place of *Sanctorum Communionem* in the Apostles' Creed - - - - - 261

INDEX - - - - - - - - - - - 263

I

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH

TE PER ORBEM TERRARUM
SANCTA CONFITETUR ECCLESIA

I

THE CHURCH AND ITS NOTES

THE great society which the New Testament calls the 'Ecclesia,' the Assembly or Congregation,[1] has been known to Englishmen from Saxon times as the 'Church.'[2] The two names offer complementary views of the Christian brotherhood. The Greek word *Ecclesia* represents it as the congregation of the New Israel; the English word *Church*, which means the House of the Lord, suggests a building dedicated to the service of God. Both these conceptions are Biblical, and they meet on the first occasion when the Society is mentioned in the New Testament,

[1] On ἐκκλησία see Dr. Hort's *Ecclesia*, c. 1; Hamilton, *People of God*, ii. p. 35 ff.

[2] 'Church' (kirk, Kirche), according to the best authorities, represents τὸ κυριακόν, 'the Lord's House,' the normal Greek name for the Church-building from the fourth century onward. Thus the Synod of Neo-Caesarea between 314 and 325 speaks of catechumens as οἱ εἰσερχόμενοι εἰς τὸ κυριακόν (*can.* 5) and the Synod of Laodicea uses κυριακά as a synonym for ἐκκλησίαι (*can.* 28). On the later history of the word *church*, see the *New Oxford Dictionary*, *s.v.*

'I will build my Ecclesia,' our Lord is reported to have said;[1] the Congregation of His new people is an edifice to be reared by Christ Himself on the rock of an immovable faith. The Epistles retain the double figure; if 'the saints,' *i.e.* the body of baptized believers, are "the Israel of God," "an elect race," "a holy nation,"[2] they are also represented as "built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the corner-stone."[3] In Him the whole building grows into a holy temple. The Church is the House of God, a great mansion replete with all things necessary for the Master's use; a spiritual house built of living stones, designed for holy, priestly service.[4]

Such passages strike the note which is taken up by the English word 'Church' and its Teutonic cognates. Nevertheless, the dominant conception of the Christian Society in the New Testament is best expressed by Ecclesia, the assembly of all who have been made disciples of Jesus Christ. The word has a significant history. It passed into Christian use from the Greek Old Testament, where from Deuteronomy onwards, it is the normal rendering of the Hebrew *qāhāl*,[5] the usual name for the Congregation

[1] Matt. xvi. 18. [2] Gal. vi. 16, 1 Pet. ii. 9.

[3] Eph. ii. 20 f. [4] 1 Tim. iii. 15, 2 Tim. ii. 20, 1 Pet. ii. 5.

[5] In the earlier books *συναγωγή* is used for קָהָל; see Thackeray, *Grammar of O.T. Greek*, i. p. 14.

of Israel. No doubt the Greek translators of Deuteronomy and the subsequent books of the canon took over *ecclesia* from Greek municipal life, in which an important part was played by the popular assembly so named. Moreover, the early and wide acceptance of the word as a name for the Christian brotherhood may well have been due to its familiarity in the cities of Asia Minor, where the earliest Gentile Churches were planted by St Paul. In each of the Greek-speaking cities evangelized by the Apostle there was henceforth, side by side with the assembly of all the citizens which was recognized by the State, an assembly meeting under divine sanction—an 'Ecclesia of God,'[1] composed of the citizens of the Divine City resident in the place. Nevertheless, it was as succeeding to the position and privileges of ancient Israel that the Christian Church received the name Ecclesia. The Christian use of the term was derived from the Greek Old Testament, and not directly from the municipal life of the Greek city-state.

Our Lord, as it appears from St Matthew, twice spoke of the future Christian Society as the Ecclesia,[2] using probably its Aramaic equivalent. There seems to be no sufficient ground for refusing to believe that He spoke in this way.[3] On the lowest

[1] 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Cor. i. 1; 1 Thess. i. 1, ii. 14; 2 Thess. i. 1, 4.

[2] Matt. xvi. 18, xviii. 17. Cf. M'Neile, *ad loc.*

[3] See Allen on St Matthew, p. 176; Stanton, *Gospels*, ii. p. 348 ff.; *Oxford Synoptic Studies*, p. 279 ff.

possible estimate of His person and character, it is not improbable that He foresaw, as the result of His ministry, a reproduction on wider lines of the Old Testament Congregation of Jahweh, drawn together by their allegiance to Himself; that He contemplated something of this kind is confirmed by another Matthaean saying,[1] in which the Twelve are represented as the future judges of the tribes of the future Israel.

May we go a step further, and say that our Lord not only foresaw, but founded the Catholic Church? If the question means, 'Did He leave behind Him a constitution or even the outline of a constitution for the new Society? did He deliver instructions relating to the organization, the ministry, the worship of the future Church, a system answering in the smallest degree to the minuteness of the Levitical legislation ascribed to Moses?' the answer must be that we have no record of any such provision, and no hint that it was made. On the contrary, all that we know of our Lord's purpose and methods would lead us to suppose that no such scheme was in His thoughts.[2] The working out of details was deliberately left to the Apostles and to the future Church, taught and guided by the gift of the Spirit of Christ; the Master was content to lay down principles, and to mark out the great lines on which the Kingdom

[1] Matt. xix. 28. [2] See *Pastor pastorum*, pp. 222 f., 236 f.

was to proceed. Yet in another sense the foundations of the Church were certainly laid by Jesus Christ during His life on earth. In those years He gathered round Him a body of disciples, and out of the body He formed the nucleus of a ministry; He instituted, if the Gospels are to be believed, the two great Sacraments, of which the one admits to membership in the Church, and the other forms the chief bond of union between those who already are its members. But the Apostolate and the two Sacraments of the Gospel constitute the basis of the entire edifice. This basis was the work of Christ Himself, and not of His Apostles. He "did not encourage His disciples to found societies; He instituted a society for them to belong to, as the means of belonging to Him."[1] In this sense, then, unless we are prepared to abandon the whole structure of the Christian tradition as unhistorical, the Church was certainly founded by our Lord while He was yet on earth.

But if the Church was founded by Christ in person, He continued to build it after His Ascension by the hands of His Spirit.[2] No sooner had the promised Paraclete come, than this process may be

[1] Bp Gore, *Ministry of the Church*, p. 10. Cf. *Ecce Homo*, p. 92: "It was not from accident or for convenience that Christ formed a society . . . To organize a society, and to bind the members of it together by the closest ties, were the business of His life."

[2] Acts ii. 41 ff.

seen at work: men were baptized by thousands and added to the Church, by being made to drink of the one Spirit of Christ; and the common life that followed bore witness to the reality of their incorporation into the one Body. The community at first regarded itself as numerically one, even when it had extended to localities remote from Jerusalem; in the best text of Acts ix. 31 we read of "the Church throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria."[1] It is not until the new movement has passed beyond the limits of Palestine and into Gentile lands that mention is made of a plurality of churches. Antioch, the mother city of Gentile Christianity, had its own local church;[2] and the Pauline mission planted a church in every city which it visited.[3] Thessalonica and Corinth had each its own 'church'; and Galatia, being a province, more than one; the province of Asia, as we learn from the Apocalypse, a few decades later, had at least seven.[4] Yet the unity of the original design was not lost through this plurality, nor even obscured. Our Lord Himself, we gather from St Matthew, had contemplated a multiplicity of societies within the unity of the one Body; if on one occasion He had spoken of the

[1] ἡ μὲν οὖν ἐκκλησία is the reading of ℵABC; αἱ μὲν οὖν ἐκκλησίαι, that of the Received Text, is an obvious correction.

[2] Acts xiii. 1. [3] Acts xiv. 23, xvi. 5.

[4] 1 Thess. i. 1; 2 Thess. i. 1; Gal. i. 2; Apoc. i. 4.

Ecclesia as a single edifice, on another He had given the name to each local congregation of believers.[1] Each congregation was to be a church in miniature, the representative of the One Body in its own locality; the Church itself in all localities was to remain one and the same, since it had one Head and one Spirit.[2] The members of local Christian societies are also members, through their baptism into Christ, of the great Church which Christ founded and which His Spirit is building in all lands and all ages of the world.

The Church, as conceived in the New Testament, is necessarily imperfect throughout the whole course of its history; it is a body not yet grown to maturity, a building which is yet in process of erection. But its perfection is often anticipated by the Apostolic writers, with an idealism which transcends earthly conditions. The Mother of Christians is a 'Jerusalem above,' the true, heavenly Zion, the Ecclesia of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, the Holy City which is seen descending from God out of heaven. Our citizenship is already in heaven, waiting to be revealed at the coming of the Lord.[3] The earthly Church is the Church in making, in which

[1] In Matt. xviii. 17 *εἰπον τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ* clearly refers to the local congregation.

[2] 1 Cor. xii. 27; Eph. i. 22, iv. 4.

[3] Gal. iv. 26, Phil. iii. 20 f., Heb. xii. 22 f., Apoc. xxi. 10 ff.

the heavenly ideal realizes itself ever more and more. The goal lies before us as yet; the ideal has not been attained; yet the earthly and heavenly are one, and the earthly will one day cast off the limitation of its immaturity, and enter on the inheritance of the Saints in light.

Meanwhile the Church on earth, as it presented itself to the thought of the Apostolic age, is a historical and visible Society. The Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypse enable us to trace the course of our Lord's great foundation from the day of His departure to the last years of the first century. And it is not a vision or a mere idealism that we see, but the orderly growth of an association of men, women, and children, admitted to membership by a definite and external act, an association existing under the ordinary conditions of life, and gathered in communities localized within the cities of the Roman Empire, officered by men appointed by the Apostles or their deputies, united in one great commonwealth by the bonds of a common faith, hope, and love.

To-day the Christian Society may seem to be further from its ideal than it was in the first age. The Coming of the Lord has long ceased to be expected as an event of the near future, and with the Advent the prospect of the Church attaining her perfection has receded into a remote distance. Moreover, the divisions which St Paul deprecated have been

multiplied to such an extent that the historical Church barely maintains its position as the Church of the majority. Yet the institution which was founded by Jesus Christ, and built up by His Spirit is, after nineteen centuries, alive and at work in the world, and the Lord is still the Supreme Architect of His Ecclesia.

We ask ourselves how this Divine foundation may be known from the many religious institutions of human origin that now claim the name of church. What are the notes of the true Church? A recent writer [1] has deprecated this enquiry on the ground that it ignores "the possibility that, in a disunited Church, no one division may possess all those characteristics, which are actually indispensable to the life of the whole." If this is possible, the fact sufficiently condemns the divisions that make it so. But it does not relieve us from the duty of discovering, if we can, what the indispensable characteristics of the Church as a whole actually are. To that task we shall now apply ourselves.

1. The first note of the Church of Jesus Christ is Unity. The New Testament indeed recognizes, as we have seen, the existence of many *ecclesiae* as well as of the One Ecclesia; we read of 'the churches,' and not only of 'the Church.' But the conception

[1] B. H. Streeter, in *Restatement and Reunion*, p. 150.

of the One Church is prior to that of the many churches. The One Church is not an agglomeration of the many, but the ideal which reflects itself in the many, and gives them their churchly character and name.[1]

The unity of the Church is the unity of a single organism, the mystical Body of the Christ. "By one spirit were we all baptized into one body"; "ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof." "As many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ"; "ye are all one man in Christ Jesus." "There is one body, and one Spirit." The One Church is the union, not of all local churches, but of all their members.[2] Baptism admits, not into a particular church, but into union with Christ, and therefore into union with His Body, the universal Ecclesia.

The unity of the Church, strange as this may appear, has never found expression in the Western Creeds; to give it symbolical recognition was the work of Eastern Christianity. As the East confessed One God and One Lord, so it confessed One Church.[3]

[1] Hort, *Ecclesia*, p. 168: "There is no grouping of them [*i.e.* the local Ecclesiae] into practical wholes or into one great whole. The members which make up the One Ecclesia are not communities, but individual men."

[2] 1 Cor. xii. 13, 27; Gal. iii. 27 ff.; Eph. iv. 4.

[3] Thus the Constantinopolitan Creed: πιστεύομεν εἰς ἕνα θεόν . . . εἰς ἕνα Κύριον . . . εἰς μίαν . . . ἐκκλησίαν.

Local circumstances may perhaps account for this insistence on unity. To the East, with its prevalent dualism and early crop of heresies and schisms, the note of unity was of the first importance; whereas the West, comparatively free from these dangers, and possessing a strong centre of external coadhesion, had less need to be constantly reminded of the essential oneness[1] of the Body of Christ. So it has come to pass that we Westerns of to-day owe it to an Eastern creed that at the Eucharist we acknowledge the Church to be one. On the other hand, the first formal treatise on the Unity of the Church is due to the Latin West. Cyprian's tract *On the Unity of the Catholic Church* was called forth by the necessities of a great crisis.[2] At Rome, in a time of persecution, the Christian camp was divided in the face of the enemy; and Carthage was threatened with a like disaster. Cyprian saw that such offences against the unity of the body were not only injurious to the Church, but fatal to the spiritual life of the separatists. "Break a bough off from a tree, and the fruit upon it will be unable to mature itself; cut off a stream from the fountainhead, and that stream will presently dry up. There is one Head, one Source, one Mother,

[1] The unity of the Body of Christ is not accidental, but necessary; cf. Moberly, *Ministerial Priesthood*, p. 2 ff.; Mason, *Faith of the Gospel*, p. 238.

[2] See Benson, *Cyprian*, pp. 134 ff., 180 ff.

rich in the successive generations of her offspring; from her we have our birth, our nourishment, our very breath."[1] Events proved Cyprian to be right; Novatianism died hard, but it died in the end, while the Church, from which the Novatianist party broke away, maintained her vitality.

A unity which is ultimately spiritual is compatible with much variety. As individual members of the Church may differ in character and gifts without prejudice to their life in Christ, so individual churches may differ without losing their essential unity. Diversities of gifts, ministrations, operations are possible, as St Paul has taught us, among those who have the same Spirit, the same Lord, the same God. Such diversities are not breaches of unity.[2] Even the very serious differences which now divide the historical churches of Christendom—differences in doctrine, discipline, and worship, involving for the present loss of intercommunion—leave their fundamental unity unimpaired. The interruption of Christian fellowship between East and West, and, in the West, between the Roman and Anglican churches, is perplexing and deplorable, a gaping wound in the Body of Christ, into which all good Christians will according to their ability pour the oil and wine of prayer and conciliatory effort; but it does not destroy the inner coherence which comes from the

[1] *De unitate*, c. 5. [2] 1 Cor. xii. 4 ff.

possession of the same Creeds,[1] the same great Sacraments, the same threefold ministry, the same supernatural life.

A more difficult problem has been raised by the multiplication of Christian societies, started since the middle of the sixteenth century by leaders who broke away from the communion of the historical Church. Many of these bodies hold the substance of the primitive faith, and retain the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist. They baptize into the Name of the Holy Trinity; they receive, sometimes with a reverence which savours of a superstitious regard for the letter, all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments. But they neither possess nor recognize the Episcopate, and with the exception of the Presbyterian bodies, they have abandoned the other orders of the ministry, and the principle of succession. Can it be said that these societies belong to the unity of the Church?[2] that they are 'churches' in the sense in which the local communities planted by the Apostles

[1] See A. P. Forbes, *Nicene Creed*, 276: "Subjective unity may be suspended, while objective unity is maintained."

[2] Lindsay (*The Church and the Ministry*, p. 13 f.) seems to place the unity of the Church in the personal union of its individual members with the Head: "It can never be adequately represented by any outward polity, but must always be, in the first instance, at least, a religious experience." It would be truer to say that the unity of the Church is an objective fact, which religious experience proves true, but which exists before it is experienced, and rests on the truth that the Church has one Head and one Spirit.

were churches, *i.e.* that they represent in their several localities the One Society founded by Jesus Christ?

In endeavouring to answer this question care must be taken to distinguish between the relation in which the members of non-episcopal societies stand to the Church, and that which belongs to the societies themselves. Baptized members of such societies are by virtue of their baptism members of the Body of Christ; for according to the ruling of the Western Church the act of Baptism, if administered according to Christ's ordinance, is not invalidated by irregularities in the status of the minister.[1] But this is not equivalent to an acknowledgement of the claim of these societies to be 'churches' in the New Testament sense of the word, *i.e.* local representatives of the One great Christian brotherhood. As a matter of convenience or of courtesy an inexact use of the name may pass unchallenged; but it is important to note that as a matter of fact the societies known in England as 'the free churches' have little in common with the local churches of the Apostolic age. The latter, so far as we can gather, were in every case founded and guided by Apostles or Apostles' deputies, or at least by persons in communion with them; and before the first generation passed away, provision was made for the continuity of the Apostolic

[1] Such is practically the judgement of the Western Council of Arles, A.D. 314 (*can.* 8).

ministry. "The Apostles"—so writes Clement of Rome[1] before the end of the first century—"received the Gospel from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ was sent forth from God. So then Christ is from God, and the Apostles are from Christ. Preaching everywhere in town and country, they appointed the first-fruits of their labours, when they had proved them by the Spirit, as bishops and deacons of those who should believe . . . and afterwards they issued a direction[2] to the intent that when these fell asleep other approved men should succeed to their ministry." Each of the primitive churches thus organized was the sole representative of the Ecclesia in its own locality; such a spectacle as is now presented in every English town and almost in every English village, of dissident denominations and rival places of worship dividing among them a population baptized into the One Christ, was nowhere to be seen in the first days of Christianity. The Epistles of the New Testament indeed refer frequently to the evils of party spirit within the Church, and even speak of divisions and schisms, which they denounce in no measured terms;[3] but the spirit of disunion had not yet gone to the length of breaking up the assembly

[1] 1 Cor. cc. 42, 44.

[2] Reading ἐπινομήν = (?) ἐπινομίδα: the old Latin version has *legem*. Lightfoot, reading ἐπιμονήν, translates 'continuance.'

[3] Cf. *e.g.* Rom. xvi. 17 f., 1 Cor. i. 10, Gal. v. 20, Phil. ii. 1 f., Jude 19.

which met to celebrate the Eucharist.[1] If some Christians had begun to absent themselves from the meetings of the brethren,[2] there is no sign that as yet congregation was set up against congregation. Nor, if such a thing had occurred, can it be conceived that St Paul would have called the separatist congregations 'churches of God.' It is not of course to be forgotten that in our case the blame cannot be laid only to the charge of the separatists: the representatives of the historical Church must bear their full share of it. Moreover, the older non-episcopal bodies have rooted themselves so firmly in English soil, and spread so widely, that their members not unnaturally regard their claims as equal to those of the Church, and may be acquitted of any direct or conscious act of schism. Nor ought we to overlook the high moral and spiritual level attained by many of these communities, or the manifold works of piety and the evidences of personal sanctity which abound in them, or the contributions which they have made to sacred learning, or lastly and chiefly, the splendour of their achievements in the foreign mission field. For all these signs of the working of His Spirit in non-episcopal bodies we thank God, and we recognize those who manifest them as brethren in Christ, whose

[1] At Corinth, for instance, there were *σχίσματα* and apparently *αἱρέσεις*, but the whole church met *ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ* for the Agapé and Eucharist.

[2] Heb. x. 25.

faith and love we desire to follow. But the fact remains that the position occupied by these separatist bodies is not that of the churches described in the New Testament, and would not have been recognized as legitimate by the Christian commonwealth of primitive days. They are voluntary associations of baptized Christians, religious societies which have shewn themselves capable of doing much admirable work; but they lack the note of unity which characterizes the historical Church. 'Churches,' in the strict and Scriptural sense, they are not.[1]

The Church preserves her unity by maintaining continuity in faith and order with the Society which was founded by our Lord and planted in the world by His Apostles. Continuity in order and also, to a great extent, in faith, is maintained through the Episcopate. So far all the historical churches of Christendom are agreed and have been agreed from the second century onwards. The Roman church stands alone in adding a further condition. The Episcopate and the Church itself must have a single visible head. "The Pope," it is claimed, "as

[1] Mr. Streeter (*Restatement and Reunion*, p. 151. f.) appears to me to confuse the issue when he writes: "Where these—the fruit of the Spirit—abound in a community, it is surely to run the risk of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit to deny it to be a veritable branch of the Church of Christ." That individuals—even (if it be so) the majority of individuals in a community—bear the fruit of the Spirit is no proof that the community as such is a 'church' in the New Testament sense of the word.

successor to Peter, and the true and legitimate Vicar of Christ, presides over the Universal Church, the father and governor of all the faithful."[1] No equally short proposition ever bristled with a greater number of contentious points. It assumes, in the first place, that our Lord appointed a vicariate on earth, over and above that of the Paraclete who was sent in His name; and that He made Peter His first vicar, with the power of transmitting the office to his successors. It assumes, further, that the Bishops of Rome are the successors of Peter, not only in the episcopate, but in the vicariate, and are thus governors of the whole Church on earth. To us Anglicans the first of these assumptions appears to rest on a false exegesis, and the second on a historical fiction. It is fully admitted that from early post-apostolic times the Roman church enjoyed an honorary primacy among the churches of the Empire, and more especially in the West, partly as the church of the capital, partly because tradition ascribed its foundation to the two great Apostles, St Peter and St Paul. It was natural and suitable, as Irenaeus points out, that all the churches should forgather to the Roman church in view of its pre-eminence;[2] that Western Christendom

[1] *Catech. Rom.* II. vii. 25.

[2] Irenaeus, *haer.* iii. 3. 2 "ad hanc enim ecclesiam propter potentiorem principalitatem necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam." On *principalitas*, 'precedency,' 'preeminence,' see Benson, *Cyprian*, p. 537 ff. Cf. Mr. Turner in *Camb. Medieval History*, i. p. 172: "from the

should look to Rome for leadership, adopt its creed, seek its help, respect its authority. It was however the Roman church rather than the Roman Bishop, the foundation of St Peter and St Paul rather than the successor of St Peter, that received the homage of Christendom in the first three centuries. Even Cyprian, who interprets the Lord's promise to Peter as emphasizing the unity of the Church by basing it on one of the Twelve,[1] and who regards the Roman Bishop as occupying the chair of Peter, shews no disposition to accept the ruling of Rome on a disputed point of order;[2] in the judgement of the great African saint, the last word lies not with the Bishop of Rome, but with the Episcopate as a whole.[3] There were not indeed wanting, even before the end of the age of persecution, tokens of a disposition on the part of some of the Roman Bishops to claim powers in excess of the legitimate influence which all were willing to concede to the first see in the Empire; witness the intolerance of Victor (190-199) and of

second century onwards a catena of testimony makes and acknowledges the claims of the Roman Church to be, through its connexion with St. Peter and St. Paul, in a special sense the depository and guardian of an Apostolic tradition, a type and model for other churches."

[1] Cyprian, *ep.* lix. 14 "ecclesiam principalem, unde unitas sacerdotalis (the one Episcopate) exorta est." Cf. *de unit.* 4.

[2] See *e.g.* his letter to Stephen (*ep.* lxiii.), noting especially his attitude in the last clause of the letter (§ 3); and cf. Benson, *Cyprian*, p. 307 ff.

[3] Cyprian, *de unitate*, 5.

Stephen (254-257). But it was not till after the conversion of Constantine, the founding of a new capital, and the weakening of the Imperial power in the West, that the Papacy was able to convert its primacy into a supremacy ; and not before the days of Hildebrand and Innocent III. that the Papal supremacy grew into an autocracy which provoked the reaction that culminated in the great revolt of the sixteenth century. In that revolt not only the supremacy of Rome vanished in a great part of Western Europe, but by a just nemesis she lost also the primacy which was generally conceded to her in early times. She has consoled herself by declaring all churches which renounce the Roman obedience to be cut off from the unity of the Universal Church. But the sentence has no terrors for those who like ourselves have retained the historic Episcopate and the faith of the ancient Creeds.

Reunion with Rome on the basis of an acceptance of the Papal pretensions is neither possible nor to be desired. It is the will of the True Pastor of the Universal Church that His flock shall be one, but He does not require that it shall be included in a single fold.[1] Each national church is left free to mould, in non-essentials, the particulars of worship and discipline, in such wise as experience shews to

[1] John x. 16 *γενήσονται μία ποίμνη* (one flock), *εἷς ποιμήν*. He does not say *γ. μία αὐλή* (one fold).

be most edifying to the faithful within its limits. To this extent independence is not only permissible but salutary, and is no detriment to catholic unity. Nevertheless, the restoration of intercommunion between the historical churches is much to be desired. The presentation by a Catholic Christian of commendatory letters from his own diocese ought to secure admission to the full privileges of the Church in every other diocese of Christendom.[1] There seems to be no sufficient reason why this primitive order should not eventually be restored. It would be a simple recognition of the essential unity which binds the churches together, notwithstanding great diversities of ritual and doctrine. It would not necessarily involve on either side the acceptance of beliefs or customs which were not held by both in common. There need be no compromise of principle in such an exchange of hospitality. But it would go far towards fulfilling the Lord's prayer that His disciples might be one, so that the world might believe that He was sent by the Father.

2. The One Church is "Holy." Holiness was perhaps the most characteristic note of the Church

[1] Cf. Acts xviii. 27, 2 Cor. iii. 1. The epitaph of Avircius bears witness to this universal intercommunion of Catholics: *πίστις πάντη δὲ προῆγε | καὶ παρέθηκε τροφὴν πάντη, Ἰχθὺν ἀπὸ πηγῆς, | παμμεγέθη, καθαρόν, ὃν ἐδράξατο παρθένος ἁγνή· | καὶ τοῦτον ἐπέδωκε φίλοις ἔσθειν διὰ παντός, | οἶνον χρηστὸν ἔχουσα, κέρασμα διδοῦσα μετ' ἄρτου* (Ramsay, *Cities of Phrygia*, ii. p. 723).

as she presented herself to the thought of the first age. If the exact phrase 'holy Church' is not to be found in the New Testament, the members of the Church are from Acts ix. 13 commonly called "the saints" (*i.e.* the holy); while collectively they are described as a 'holy nation,' a 'holy city,' a 'holy sanctuary.'[1] The sub-apostolic age applied the term to the Ecclesia, whether local or universal. Thus Ignatius writes to "the holy church which is in Tralles"; Hermas in the *Shepherd* speaks of the Holy Church as the crowning work of God, for the sake of which the creation was made.[2] At Rome before the middle of the second century the candidate for Baptism confessed his faith in 'the Holy Church.'[3] No other title was given to the Church so widely or at so early a date.

The holiness of the Christian Church is a note inherited from its predecessor, the Church or congregation of Israel. Israel was called to be a holy nation, and in that sense the whole congregation of the Lord was holy.[4] The Old Testament conception of holiness, so far as it can be judged from the etymology of the Hebrew word, is that of separation, aloofness,

[1] Eph. ii. 21, 1 Pet. ii. 5, Apoc. xxii. 2.

[2] Ignatius, *Trall.* 1; Hermas, *vis.* i. 1, 6; 3, 4.

[3] Tertullian, *adv. Marc.* v. 4 "quae est mater nostra, in quam repromisimus sanctam ecclesiam."

[4] Exod. xix. 5 f., Numb. xvi. 3; cf. Deut. vii. 6, xiv. 2, etc.

isolation.[1] The God of Israel, in the infinite majesty of His uncreated being, is in a unique sense 'the Holy One'—unapproachable, transcending all finite creaturely existences; the very seraphim round His throne cry "Holy, Holy, Holy," realizing the aweful solitude of the Divine life. In a secondary sense this character belongs to persons and things dedicated to God, and separated from common use to His service. Israel was thus consecrated, made a 'people for God's own possession,'[2] separated from all other peoples by their singular relation to Jahweh. Places where God revealed Himself became "holy ground"; and in like manner we read of "holy bread," "holy flesh," "holy vessels," "holy garments," "holy days."[3] In the case of dedicated persons the word came to bear an ethical sense. It was seen that God's own aloofness rests on the basis of His infinite moral purity, and that men who are engaged in His service must be holy as God is holy. The prophets labour to impress this new ideal upon Israel, and draw pictures of a coming age

[1] See Brown-Driver-Briggs, *Lexicon, s.v.* קָדֹשׁ; cf., however, Hort on 1 Pet. i. 15: "The meaning does not appear to be 'separate' in the sense of aloofness or remoteness, but rather of eminence or perfection."

[2] Exod. *l.c.* λαὸς περιούσιος: cf. 1 Pet. *l.c.* λ. *εἰς περιποίησιν.*

[3] Cf. Kautzsch, *Religion of Israel*, in Hastings, *B.D.* v. p. 682. Kautzsch points out that "the filling up of the concept of 'holy' with moral contents" is most marked when the word is transferred to God. But "expressions about the holiness of God are at first very rare" (cf. Exod. xv. 11, Josh. xxiv. 19, 1 Sam. ii. 20).

when God will give the nation a new heart and a new spirit, cleansing their sins, and causing them to walk in His statutes and to be His people indeed.[1]

The New Testament carries forward this advance and converts the vision into a reality. The Church inherits the position of the 'holy nation,' and realizes the moral significance of holiness as it could not be realized even by the prophets of the older Israel. The Incarnation, and the relations with God into which it has brought the Church of Christ, have emphasized infinitely the call to sanctity. Those who have been baptized into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost are pledged to newness of life by a threefold bond: as the sons of God, as the members of Christ, and as the temples of the Holy Spirit. "Ye shall be perfect," our Lord teaches, "as your heavenly Father is perfect." "As He which hath called you is holy (St Peter exhorts), be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living."[2] Further, as the Bride and the Body of the sinless and glorified Christ, the Church must make it her aim to live as He lived on earth, and to attain to the life which He now lives in heaven.[3] Lastly, as a habitation of God in the Spirit, the Church is not only called to holiness, but endowed with it; the Source

[1] Jerem. xxxi. 33, Ezek. xi. 19 f. [2] Matt. v. 48, 1 Pet. i. 15.

[3] Cf. Forbes, *Nicene Creed*, p. 277: "The graces poured forth on the human nature of our Lord are reflected and imaged forth in His Body."

of all spiritual grace, the Power that creates anew the likeness of God in human life, is within her at all times. The compilers of the early creeds rightly made belief in the Holy Church to follow immediately after belief in the Holy Ghost.[1] The holiness of the Christian Church is an infused gift, the fruit of the indwelling of the Spirit of God and of Christ.

Together with new relations to God, the Church has gained a new conception of the nature of holiness. The idea of separation from the world, through consecration to the service of God, holds its ground; thus St Paul does not hesitate to say to the Christians in the great heathen city of Corinth, "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness and iniquity, and what communion hath light with darkness?"[2] Yet the same Apostle writes elsewhere to the same Church, "If any of them that believe not biddeth you to a feast, and ye are disposed to go, whatever is set before you eat, asking no questions for conscience sake";[3] *i.e.* he permits believers to accept the hospitality of unbelievers, and to partake of food which, for all they knew, might have been offered in heathen temples. The separateness of the Church, then, differed widely from the exclusiveness of the synagogue. The Church held rigorously aloof from the

[1] On exceptions to this rule see Pearson's note (Art. ix. *ad init.*).

[2] 2 Cor. vi. 14. [3] 1 Cor. x. 27.

vices of heathendom, and from its idolatries, but manifested none of the Pharisaic exclusiveness which forbade a Jew to associate with men of another race or creed.[1] Tertullian can say to pagan assailants of Christianity, "We live with you side by side; we share your food, your dress, your institutions."[2] Or, as another early Christian writer puts the case: "Christians are not distinguished from the rest of mankind, either in locality or in speech or in customs; they follow the customs of the place in dress and food and the other arrangements of life."[3] The Church desired to erect no unnecessary barrier between herself and the world; she knew that the world itself had been redeemed, and that the gates of the kingdom of heaven stood open to men of all nations. Her separateness was due, not, as the heathen supposed, to hatred of mankind, but to hatred of the evil with which heathen society was everywhere permeated.

The Church, then, was not called to go out of the world, but rather to leaven it by her presence and intervention in its business, its work, and its daily life; the hermit's cell and the coenobite community were unknown in the earliest days of Christianity. Nevertheless, the early Church lived a life which was not the life of the world, and which involved a

[1] Acts x. 28 ἀθέμιτόν ἐστιν ἀνδρὶ Ἰουδαίῳ κολλᾶσθαι ἢ προσέρχεσθαι ἀλλοφύλῳ.

[2] Tertullian, *Apol.* 26.

[3] *Ep. ad Diogn.* 5.

certain remoteness from it. She was intensely conscious of possessing the Spirit of holiness. "Have we not (so Clement of Rome appeals to the church of Corinth) one Spirit of grace poured out upon us?"[1] "I see in you of a truth (so 'Barnabas' writes to the church of Alexandria) the Spirit poured out from the rich Lord who is its Source."[2] Ignatius likens the members of the Ephesian church to stones used in the building of the Temple of God, hoisted into their place by the Cross and the Spirit.[3] The Holy Spirit that dwells in Christians (Hermas tells the Roman church) is a pure spirit that is saddened and grieved by sin. Individual members of the Church may by their own fault lose the Spirit, but it remains with the Church as a whole, which is therefore permanently holy.[4]

The holiness of the Church is the result of the Incarnation and more directly of the Pentecostal Gift. It consists in the renewal in regenerate man of the Divine Image and Likeness, lost through human sin, restored in the humanity of the Incarnate Son, and imparted by the Spirit of Christ to the members of His mystical Body. The Church is the subject of the process which the New Testament knows as Sanctification, *i.e.* the gradual infusion into man of the moral nature of God. The seal impressed

[1] Clement, 1 Cor. 46. [2] Barn. *ep.* 3. [3] Ign. *Eph.* 9.
[4] Herm. *mand.* v. 1. 2, 3; x. 2. 1, 3; 3. 1, 2.

on the members of Christ bears two inscriptions, of which the one that looks manward runs, "Let every one that nameth the Name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness."[1] The grace of God instructs us that "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world."[2] To set forward this movement in the world was the purpose of our Lord's First Coming; to complete and crown it will be the purpose of His Return. "Christ gave Himself for the Church that He might sanctify her"; He comes again to "present her to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish."[3] Holiness is at once the present calling of the Church, and her destiny in the ages to come.

All this may have been in the mind of the men who in the second century confessed their belief in the 'Holy Church.' They believed themselves to belong to a society which was distinguished from every other society in the world by the note of holiness: by belonging to God, and bearing the impress of His likeness. And on the whole they rose to the level of this high calling. The discipline of the early Church was severe;[4] beside the first

[1] 2 Tim. ii. 19. [2] Tit. ii. 11. [3] Eph. v. 25 ff.

[4] See *Journal of Theological Studies*, iv. p. 327 ff., where the references are given in full.

remission of sins in Baptism, but one act of penitence and one absolution were allowed by the sterner spirits of the second and third centuries. Tertullian exclaims against the leniency of the Roman Bishop of his time in remitting the grosser sins of the flesh even after penance. Tertullian was a Montanist, it is true, when he wrote this; but even in his Catholic days he allowed only a "second penitence, a single plank" thrown out to the drowning soul that had lost its baptismal innocence. Hermas of Rome and Clement of Alexandria are nearly of the same mind; there ought, they say, to be no post-baptismal sins which could call for public confession and absolution. Had not St John taught that "whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him"?[1] The Church is the family of God, and sin is alien from its new-born sanctity.

But if so, were the Donatists right when they maintained that a Church which tolerated the presence of evil men within its borders was not and could not be the true Body of Christ?[2] Augustine's reply is that by the Lord's command the tares are not to be rooted up now, but left for the day of harvest: that the fishers of men are to gather of every kind, reserving the work of overhauling and

[1] 1 John iii. 9, v. 18.

[2] See on this subject Trench, *Parables*, p. 84 ff.; Robertson, *Regnum Dei*, p. 194 ff.

separating that which they have taken till the great Draw-net is drawn up on the eternal shore. His answer is open to the retort that in the parable of the Tares the field is the world and not the Church; and that in the sister parable of the Draw-net the net is the external machinery of the Church, and not its constitution or its life. Nevertheless both parables clearly recognize that the evil will be mingled with the good to the end, and that it is not the Master's will that His Church shall make any attempt on a great scale to separate them in this life. This does not of course rule out the exercise by the Church of a proper discipline in cases of open sin or heresy. The Christian Society must have the right which is inherent in all societies, to purge herself of members who renounce her principles or bring dishonour upon her by evil living. But our Lord's rule postpones the final judgement to the end; and meanwhile "in the visible Church the evil is ever mingled with the good."[1]

The holiness of the Church, however, does not depend upon the completeness of her discipline; nor is it entirely future. The Church is holy now, because, though she has, and, as long as the world lasts, will have unworthy members, and many of them, yet she already possesses the Spirit and the Sacraments, and is already the Body of the sinless Christ. She is the

[1] Art. xxvi.

City of God in the making. Her ideal, the Jerusalem above, is holy up to the full measure of imparted holiness; the city on earth, notwithstanding all imperfections, is relatively holy, representing to the world the beginnings of the perfect life.

Many belong to the Church on earth who are not personally holy; some who are personally holy are not in communion with her. Nevertheless the Church of God, the Church of Jesus Christ, the Church of the Holy Spirit, must needs be, and alone can be, 'the Holy Church.' There is no other society in the world that can claim that great name.

3. The One Holy Church is Catholic. The word 'catholic' has no place in the Greek Bible, either in the LXX or in the New Testament.[1] It is freely used, however, in the later Greek generally. Historians speak of 'catholic,' *i.e.* universal, history; philosophers, of a 'catholic proposition' or a 'catholic law.' In Christian writers of the second century we read of the 'catholic,' *i.e.* the general resurrection; of the 'catholic' salvation, *i.e.* of that which the Church preaches to the whole world.[2] It is therefore no

[1] *καθόλου* appears (*e.g.* in Amos iii. 3 f., Acts iv. 18), but not in relation to the Church.

[2] *καθολικὴ ἱστορία* occurs in Polybius, *καθολικὸς λόγος* in Aristotle, and *καθολικώτερος νόμος* in Philo; Justin has *ἡ καθολικὴ ἀνάστασις*: Clement of Alexandria, *ἡ καθολικὴ σωτηρία*. The references may be found in Lightfoot, *Ignatius*, ii. p. 310 f.

surprise to find Ignatius,[1] early in the second century, applying this adjective to the Church throughout the world, as contrasted with the local Christian communities. "Wherever the Bishop appears (he writes to the church in Smyrna), there let the people congregate; just as the Catholic Church is to be found wherever Jesus Christ is"; *i.e.* the Bishop is the centre of the local church as Christ Himself is of the whole Church throughout the world. Some forty years after these words were written, when the church of Smyrna sent to all other Christian churches an account of the martyrdom of their Bishop, Polycarp, they addressed it "to all the communities of the holy catholic Church in every place";[2] and the word 'catholic' in this connexion occurs twice again in the same letter.[3] Before the end of the century, as we learn from the fragment known as the Muratorian canon, this title of the Church had established itself at Rome;[4] and about the same time it is used by Clement of Alexandria, who writes: "It needs no long discourse to prove that the merely

[1] *Smyrn.* 8 ὅπου ἂν φανῇ ὁ ἐπίσκοπος, ἐκεῖ τὸ πλῆθος ἔστω, ὥσπερ ὅπου ἂν ᾖ Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς, ἐκεῖ ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία.

[2] *Mart. Polyc.* prooem. πάσαις ταῖς κατὰ πάντα τόπον τῆς ἁγίας καὶ καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας παροικίαις.

[3] *Op. cit.* cc. 8, 19. In some texts it stands also in c. 16; but there the true reading is probably τῆς ἐν Σμύρνῃ ἁγίας ἐκκλησίας; see Lightfoot's note *ad loc.*

[4] The Latin version of the fragment has *ecclesia catholica, catholica ecclesia,* and once simply *catholica.*

human societies which they"—the heretical sects—"have instituted, were later in time than the catholic Church." "The one Church, which they strive to break up into many sects, is bound up with the principle of unity. We say that the ancient and catholic Church stands alone in essence and idea and principle and preeminence."[1]

'Catholic' is here evidently contrasted with 'sectarian' or 'heretical,' and in this polemical sense the word is used by other writers of the second and third centuries. It is implied when the Muratorian fragment condemns heretical scriptures on the ground that they "cannot be received in the catholic Church"; and when Tertullian speaks of an alien rule of faith as opposed to that which is promulgated by the "catholic churches."[2] Indeed, this sense is latent whenever a particular church is called 'catholic.' According to one reading of the text the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* speaks of the 'catholic church at Smyrna'; if the reading is genuine,[3] the meaning can only be 'the church which maintains the catholic tradition and order,' in opposition to the Ebionite and Docetic communities. At a somewhat later time this use of the word predominates. Thus in

[1] Clem. Al. *strom.* vii. 17, § 107. I quote Hort and Mayor's translation (p. 188 f.).

[2] Tertullian, *praescr.* 26 (reading *catholicae*); *catholice*, however, makes sense, and is perhaps to be preferred.

[3] See above, p. 34, note 3.

the *Acts of Pionius*, a martyr of the third century, Pionius is asked by the magistrate what his denomination is; and on replying "I am a Christian," he is asked again, "Of what church?" to which the martyr answers at once, "Of the catholic church";[1] *i.e.* of the orthodox Christian society, and not of any of the Christian sects. "When you are in a strange city," is Cyril of Jerusalem's advice to his catechumens, "enquire for the catholic church, and not simply for the church; since heretics call their meeting places by that name."[2] In the days of Irenaeus members of the Church were known as "churchmen";[3] in the fourth century Augustine speaks of them as 'catholics.'[4]

There is an interesting passage in the catechetical lectures of Cyril which recounts the various meanings borne in his time by the word 'catholic' when used as a title of the Church. "The Church," he writes, "is called catholic because she is throughout the whole world, from one end of the earth to the other; because she teaches universally and without fail all the doctrines that ought to be brought to the knowledge of men concerning the visible and invisible, in heaven and on earth; because she subjugates to her

[1] Ruinart, *acta mart. sinc.* p. 191: 'Quis vocaris?' . . . 'Christianus.' . . . 'Cuius ecclesiae?' . . . 'Catholicae.'

[2] Cyril. Hieros. *catech.* xviii. 26.

[3] Iren. *haer.* iii. 15. 2: see Suicer, *s.v.* ἐκκλησιαστικός.

[4] He speaks *e.g.* of *catholici boni, mali* (*quaest. in Matt.* ii.).

faith the whole of mankind—rulers and their subjects, educated and uneducated alike; because she is the universal physician and healer of sins of every kind, sins of soul or body, and possesses in herself every form of excellence that can be named, in deeds and words and spiritual gifts of every kind."[1] Augustine's judgement may be added, as that of the greatest of Western doctors: "There are many things (he says) that keep me, for the best of reasons, in the bosom of the Catholic Church; the consensus of peoples and nations, an authority originally based on miracle, cherished by hopes, enriched by love, confirmed by its antiquity; the succession of her priests, extending from the chair of St Peter, to whom after the resurrection the Lord committed the care of His flock, down to the episcopate of the present day. Lastly, there is the very name 'catholic,' to which in the face of so many heresies the Church has held with such good reason that, while all heretics would like to be known as Catholics, none of them would dare to direct to his own meeting-house the stranger who asked him the way to the catholic Church."[2]

Widely as the title was used, tenaciously as it was held by the Church, and full of significance as it was felt to be, it was long before 'catholic' made its way into the Creed. The Western churches were

[1] Cyril. Hieros. *catech.* xviii. 23. [2] Aug. *contra ep. Manichaei*, 4.

content with the simple but instructive phrase 'the Holy Church.' "I believe in the Holy Church" still stood in the North African creed during the lifetime of Augustine.[1] 'Catholic' appears first about the beginning of the fifth century in the creed of the Dacian bishop, Niceta of Remesiana,[2] whose comment on it runs: "The Church is nothing else than the congregation of all saints.... Know that this one Catholic Church is established in all the world." It is found next in Gallican creeds of the sixth century, after which it gradually established itself in all Western creeds. The Eastern creeds employed it at an earlier date: it occurs in the confession of Bishop Alexander of Alexandria (†326), and in the creeds of Cyril of Jerusalem and Epiphanius, and finally in the creed of Constantinople, from which it has passed into the 'Nicene' creed of the English Order for Holy Communion.[3]

In recent years a considerable controversy has arisen, chiefly among German theologians, with regard to the origin and nature of Catholicism. According to Adolf Harnack Catholicism was "the preaching of the One God and the crucified Lord and Saviour carried over into the Hellenic world of thought, and worked out in a philosophic body of

[1] Hahn, *Symbole*, § 47; "vitam aeternam per sanctam ecclesiam" is the Augustinian form.

[2] The original may be found in Dr. Burn's *Niceta*, p. 48.

[3] Hahn, *Symbole*, §§ 61 ff.; 15, 124 ff., 144.

doctrine."[1] On the other hand, Rudolf Sohm finds the essence of Catholicism in "making the actual visible Church, regarded as a legal entity, equivalent to the Church of Christ."[2] Both definitions have elements of truth, but neither of them satisfies. On the whole, however, Sohm comes nearer to the facts than Harnack. As Sohm admits, "Catholicism emerged from primitive Christianity as a necessary and logical consequence."[3] Primitive Christianity identified the visible community of the baptized with the Body of Christ, and Catholicism was merely the carrying out of this identification in the thought and life of the historical Church. The origin of Catholicism is therefore to be sought not in the second century but in the first; not in the writings of Ignatius or Irenaeus, but in the epistles of St Paul and the teaching of Christ Himself. Of course neither the word nor the fully developed system can be found in the New Testament; but, as Sohm has rightly judged, the later system was but the logical result of principles which the New Testament enshrined. It was inevitable that, as time went on, the organization of the Christian Society should take a larger place in the conception of the Church. Even within the New Testament itself this change

[1] Harnack, *Constitution and Law of the ancient Church* (Eng. tr.), p. 255.

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 181, 242.

[3] *Op. cit.* p. 177.

may be seen in progress; the Pastoral Epistles emphasize points of order to an extent which has laid them open to the suspicion of being un-Pauline, at least in their present shape. Similarly, the primitive deposit of the faith, when it came into contact with Greek thought, naturally assumed intellectual forms unknown to the Apostolic age, until it became what Harnack characterizes as "a philosophic body of doctrine." But neither of these developements was an essential departure from the original Gospel: both the Catholic order and the Catholic doctrine were due to the working out of principles inherent in Christianity, as it was taught by Christ and His Apostles.

Catholicism is, in short, the religion of Christ interpreted by the Apostles and their successors. The Catholic Church is the great society which embraces all the baptized, exists through all the ages of the world, and maintains the whole sum of revealed truth and inherited order. Churches are catholic which adhere to the doctrine and discipline of Catholic Christianity. The title cannot be limited to bodies which acknowledge the authority of a central see, nor can it be extended to those which have thrown over the threefold ministry and cut themselves off from the historical Body of Christ. It is equally a prostitution of a noble word when it is made the exclusive property of a particular school

or church or group of churches, and when it is used to describe a medley of denominations which agree only in their rejection of a national Church that stands for the doctrine and order of ancient Christianity. The title 'Catholic' must be vindicated for all churches that retain the great Sacraments, the doctrine of the Catholic Creeds, and the succession of the historical Episcopate; and it must be denied to bodies which, however great their spiritual efficiency, do not fulfil these necessary conditions of genuine catholicity.[1]

4. The One Holy[2] Catholic Church is also Apostolic. This title of the Church, although not included in the Western creed,[3] belongs to the oldest common stock of Christian ideas.[4] "The Church throughout

[1] Cf. Pearson on the Creed, art. ix. *ad fin.*: "That Church alone which first began at Jerusalem on earth will bring us to the Jerusalem in heaven, and that alone began there which always embraceth the faith once delivered to the saints. Whatsoever Church pretendeth to a new beginning, pretendeth at the same time to a new Churchdom, and whatsoever is so new is none."

[2] The English 'Nicene' Creed strangely omits 'Holy' before 'Catholic.' *Sanctam* appears to be absent also from some pre-Reformation copies; and similarly *et apostolicam* disappears in the first hand of one MS. of the Gelasian Sacramentary (Heurtley, *Creeds of the Western Church*, p. 144, note 3; Wilson, *Gelasian Sacramentary*, pp. 55, 57). Such omissions, due to the carelessness of scribes, have of course no doctrinal significance.

[3] The Creed of Beatus of Libana (Hahn, § 57) is hardly an exception; it is marked by many Eastern features.

[4] See Clement of Rome, 1 Cor. 42.

the world," writes Irenaeus, "received the faith from the Apostles and their disciples;" "all who wish to see the truth can find it in the tradition of the Apostles, which is openly professed in every church;" "the Apostles poured into the Church, as into a rich storehouse, the whole treasury of truth, so that whosoever will, may take from thence a draught of life."[1] Tertullian challenges the heretical bodies to produce the origin of their 'churches,' to unfold the roll of their lines of bishops, and to shew that they follow a succession unbroken from the first, so that in each case their first bishop received his consecration either from an Apostle or from an Apostolic man. "This is the way," he adds, "in which the apostolic churches bring down their registers; thus the church of Smyrna points to Polycarp, who was appointed by John, and the church of Rome to Clement, who was ordained by Peter. There are other churches, no doubt, which cannot claim apostolic descent after this manner, and yet, as they agree in the common faith, are none the less accounted apostolical, since in their teaching they are akin to the apostolic foundations. On the other hand, if we examine the origin of the heretical bodies, it will be found to be marked by apostasy rather than by apostolicity."[2]

[1] Iren. *haer.* i. 10. 1, iii. 3. 1, 4.

[2] Tertullian, *praescr.* 32; *adv. Marc.* iv. 5 "si censum requiras, facilius apostaticum invenies quam apostolicum."

As Harnack points out,[1] it is remarkable that the early Church should have attached so much weight to apostolic descent, when we remember that, with the exception of St Peter and St John, none of the Twelve seems to have been in contact with the Gentile churches of the Empire. Only the churches of the province of Asia and those of Antioch and Rome could boast of having received visits from members of the original Apostolate. But the Church realized that the Twelve were the Lord's chosen witnesses, the original nucleus of the Christian society and ministry, sent into the world by Christ Himself, as He was sent by the Father; foundation stones on which the whole future edifice was to rest, even as they themselves rested on the basal Rock. It was to the Twelve that the deposit of the faith was entrusted by the Lord, and by them that it was passed on to the Church. St Paul indeed claims to have received his Gospel immediately from the Lord; yet he sought an opportunity of comparing it with that of the other Apostles, and ascertaining that they and he were in substantial agreement.[2] From the Twelve or from St Paul the whole Church derived its faith, and herein the Church was in marked contrast with the heretical sects. In these circumstances it was not unnatural that, in the East more especially, the

[1] *History of Dogma* (Eng. tr.), i. 160.

[2] Gal. i. 18, ii. 2.

Catholic churches should glory in their Apostolicity, and confess it in their creeds.

The Catholic Church is Apostolic in three respects: as planted in the world by the Apostles; as adhering to the teaching of the Apostles; as carrying on the succession of Apostolic ministry.

(1) Before the Ascension our Lord charged the Apostles with the work of preaching the Gospel in Judaea and Samaria and to the uttermost part of the earth. This evangelization of Judaea and Samaria was carried out by the Twelve and their company, as the Acts relate; the Gentile missions, so far as the West was concerned, fell chiefly into other hands. But the mission of St Paul was undertaken with the full approval of the original Apostolate, and was in fact a fulfilment of a part of their task with which they were themselves not qualified to deal. By agreement and fellowship with St Paul the Twelve "were enabled to feel that they were in effect carrying out through him that extension of their sphere which it is incredible that they should ever have dismissed from their minds."[1] Thus Gentile Christendom was ultimately of Apostolic planting, even if we limit the Apostolic college to the Twelve. The churches founded by St Paul and his associates were Apostolic foundations, not only because St Paul was an Apostle, but because his work was done with the concurrence of the original Apostles.

[1] Hort, *Ecclesia*, p. 88.

As Tertullian points out in the passage already quoted, not all the churches of his day owed their origin either to the Twelve or to St Paul.[1] After the end of the Apostolic age, and the passing of all their immediate disciples, new Christian brotherhoods sprang up in regions hitherto unevangelized. The same process is going forward at this present time through the missionary labours of the modern Church. Do these churches partake of the apostolicity which the Creed attributes to the Catholic Church? The African father answers that they do, if they inherit the Apostolic doctrine.[2]

(2) The earliest converts, it is noted in Acts, "continued stedfastly in the Apostles' teaching."[3] On their teaching and the teaching of St Paul there was built up a tradition, or as the Pastorals put it, a 'deposit' was formed, which remained as an abiding treasure of the Church.[4] Its substance was known as the 'rule of faith,'[5] and found expression in the early creeds. This Apostolic tradition was held to be preserved with especial purity in churches which

[1] Tertullian, *praescr.* 20 "pro hoc et ipsae apostolicae deputabuntur ut suboles apostolicarum ecclesiarum."

[2] *Ibid.* "traducem fidei et semina doctrinae ceterae ecclesiae mutuatae sunt et cottidie mutuantur, ut ecclesiae fiant."

[3] Acts ii. 42.

[4] 2 Thess. ii. 15, iii. 6 (παράδοσις, cf. 1 Cor. xi. 2, xv. 3); 1 Tim. vi. 20, 2 Tim. i. 14 (παραθήκη).

[5] The κανὼν τῆς ἀληθείας (Iren. *haer.* i. 9. 4), or *regula fidei* (Tert. *de veland. virg.* 1).

could claim Apostolic founders, and more particularly in the Roman church, which had for its founders both St Peter and St Paul. But, in fact, the whole Catholic Church in all parts of the world possessed one and the same faith of Apostolic origin. The tradition was not simply oral; it was embodied also in the Apostolic writings, which by the end of the second century had been collected into a New Testament or 'Instrument.' Written or unwritten, the witness of the Apostolic age was the heritage of the Catholic Church; she claimed all Apostolic teaching as her own, and admitted no other body of truth.

(3) Besides Apostolic tradition, the Catholic Church possessed also an Apostolic ministry. The orderly devolution of ministerial authority from the Apostolate is a clearly marked principle of the first age The Seven were chosen by the whole body of the disciples, but on their election they were set before the Apostles, and by them admitted to their office. In the new churches among the Gentiles, elders (presbyters) were appointed by Barnabas and Saul. Later on, at Ephesus and in Crete, in the absence of the Apostle, the ordination of presbyter-bishops and deacons was entrusted by St Paul to his delegates, Timothy and Titus. Timothy himself had received the gift of ministerial grace through the laying on of the Apostle's hands.[1]

[1] 2 Tim. i. 6.

The principle of succession was maintained in the sub-apostolic age. We have already seen how Clement of Rome points out to the Corinthians who had deposed their presbyters, that the men had been appointed either by the Apostles, or, according to a provision made by the Apostles, "by other men of repute with the consent of the whole church."[1] The language is not technical, but it sufficiently indicates that some kind of ministerial succession was maintained after the death of the Apostolic founders and by their desire. As soon as the monarchical episcopate emerges, one of its functions is to secure the maintenance of this succession. "We can count up," writes Irenaeus, "those who were appointed by the Apostles to be bishops in the several churches, and their successors to our own time" (*i.e.* to about A.D. 180). "It would be tedious," he adds, "to count up the successions in all the churches," and so he selects the Roman succession as an example.[2] The moral is: "We must obey the elders in the churches who derive their succession from the Apostles or men who with their succession to the episcopal office have received the sure gift of truth." Those who hold aloof from the succession are to be held suspect. Hippolytus, a

[1] Clem. Rom. 1 Cor. 42.

[2] Iren. *haer.* iii. 3. 1-3; Tertullian, *praescr.* 36. Tertullian names Corinth, Philippi, Ephesus, as well as Rome, under the head of *ecclesiae apostolicae*, to any of which an appeal might be made, according to the geographical position of the enquirer.

junior contemporary and disciple of Irenaeus, attaches the same importance to Apostolical succession; "the Apostles (he says) imparted the Holy Spirit to men who held the right faith, and we, their successors, have partaken of the same grace, highpriesthood, and office of teaching, and are accounted guardians of the Church."[1] "Christ," writes Cyprian[2] in the next generation and amid other surroundings, "says to the Apostles, and thereby to all heads of churches who succeed to the Apostles by an ordination which puts them in their place,[3] 'He who heareth you, heareth me, and he who heareth me heareth him that sent me.'"

Thus, as the Catholic Church was planted by Apostolic hands and inherits Apostolic teaching, her ministry succeeds in an unbroken line to the Apostolic office, so far as the latter is perpetuated in the life of later Christendom. This is not to say that the Bishops are in all respects successors of the Apostles, or even that monarchical episcopacy dates back to the lifetime of St John.[4] But a succession of some kind there clearly was from the first, and thus the principle of continuity was in any case maintained.[5] In

[1] Hippol. *haer.* i. prooem.

[2] *Ep.* lxvi. 4.

[3] *Ordinatione vicaria*: the same phrase occurs again in *ep.* lxxv. 16.

[4] Tertullian maintains this view, for which indeed there is much to be said: *adv. Marc.* iv. 5 "ordo episcoporum ad originem recensus in Ioannem stabit auctorem."

[5] As Bishop Gore points out (*The Church and the Ministry*, p. 73), "the apostolic succession has taken shape in a threefold ministry . . .

other words, the authority to minister in the ancient Church came not from the Church itself, or from Christ acting directly through the Church, but from the Apostles or their delegates or successors, in virtue of Christ's original gift to the Twelve. The people elected their clergy, but the clergy received authority from the hands of those who ultimately derived their commission from the Apostles. Thus in the Catholic Church every ministerial act is linked by historical sequence with the work of the first age, with the ministry of the Twelve and of St Paul, with the ministry of Christ Himself.

The note of Apostolicity serves to correct an error which may arise from emphasizing too exclusively the note of Catholicity. Catholicity, insisting as it does on the comprehensiveness of the Church, is liable to be misunderstood as if it imposed no restrictions, demanded no conditions of membership. To the modern mind catholicity conveys the impression of a *laissez-faire* policy which may go so far as to ignore the fundamental difference between truth and error, good order and a dangerous laxity. The addition of 'Apostolic' to the description of the Church forbids this misuse of the term. The Church of Jesus Christ

But this is rather the outcome of a principle than itself a principle." The principle is that "ministerial authority depends on continuous transmission from the Apostles, through those to whom the Apostles transmitted the power to transmit" (Moberly, *Ministerial Priesthood*, p. 116).

opens the doors to all comers, but all who enter must accept Apostolic doctrine, and submit to Apostolic order and discipline. The comprehensiveness of the Church is conditioned by her resolve to maintain an unbroken connexion with the Christian Society of the Apostolic age. The foundations of the Holy City will always bear the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.

5. Is the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church a visible body? Or are we to think of her as purely spiritual, consisting of a certain number of elect souls known to God alone? Or are there two Churches, a visible and an invisible, and is it of the former or of the latter that our creeds speak?

The answer to these questions is to be found in the doctrine of the Incarnation.[1] As there is One Christ, who is both visible and invisible,[2] the Mystery of godliness manifested in the flesh of our humanity, the Word made flesh who dwelt among us, so His mystical Body the Church is one, invisible on one side of its life, visible on the other.

The Church is on one, and that the greater, side of her life invisible. As our Lord lived among earthly

[1] The ultimate reason for the visibility of the Church is to be found in the Incarnation; see Moehler, *Symbolism* (Eng. tr.), I. c. v.

[2] Cf. Ign. *Eph.* 7 *εἷς ἰατρός ἐστιν σαρκικὸς καὶ πνευματικός.* Ps. Clem. Rom. 2 Cor. 9 *Χριστὸς ὁ κύριός ὁ σώσας ἡμᾶς, ὢν μὲν τὸ πρῶτον πνεῦμα, ἐγένετο σάρξ.*

surroundings the life of the Eternal Son, in a glory which could be seen only by the faith of the elect, so His Church possesses an invisible life of the Spirit which the world cannot apprehend. Not to speak now of the ideal Church, which is invisible because it exists only in the purpose of God and has not yet been realized, nor again of the vast majority of Christians who have passed from us into the unseen world, the Church on earth is already a spiritual body, possessing powers and relations which the world regards as negligible because they are invisible, but which in truth constitute the *raison d'être* of the visible society.

The Visible Church is the manifestation in human life of the spiritual and invisible. She consists of visible members, who are knit together by visible sacraments; she has a visible ministry; she is a force in the visible world which meets the eye, and at the same time she belongs to the eternal order of things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard. She exists in the world, and is left in it by the Master's will to be the light of the world, to leaven the whole lump with the leaven of her life in God.

It was not long before the Church recognized that many of her members were unworthy of the Christian name; and the number of such members constantly tended to grow larger as conversions and baptisms were multiplied. Ancient Christian writers shew no disposition to conceal this fact. Augustine, for

2 NOV 1925

example,[1] distinguishes with almost unnecessary sharpness between the communion of the sacraments and the communion of saints. But neither Augustine nor any other teacher of the ancient Catholic Church had recourse to the expedient of dividing the visible Church from the invisible, as if they were two bodies, and not one and the same, viewed from different standpoints. Nor did the greater Reformers of the sixteenth century go to this length. The true author of the modern doctrine of the invisibility of the Church appears to have been Zwingli,[2] who has found a large following from the sixteenth century onwards. The idea, however, is at variance not only with the *consensus* of pre-Reformation teaching, but with the New Testament itself. The Apostolic writings know but one great Christian Society, including all the baptized, good or evil, sincere or insincere, who have not been cut off from the communion of the Church or cut themselves off by open apostasy. The True Vine has branches in it that bear no fruit and are practically dead ; yet until the Husbandman sees fit to take them away, they remain in the Vine.[3] There are not two vines, but one, the Visible Church with its external order and its spiritual life, although of the latter true members alone partake.

[1] See Robertson, *Regnum Dei*, p. 194 ff.

[2] Robertson, *op. cit.* p. 354 ff.

[3] John xv. 2 πᾶν κλῆμα ἐν ἐμοὶ μὴ φέρον καρπόν.

The spread of the Zwinglian doctrine of the invisibility of the Holy Catholic Church has been fruitful in misconceptions and practical evils. It is largely responsible for the prevalent indifference to the external order, the authority, the discipline, the worship, and the creed of Christendom. It has produced the chaos of undenominationalism, the babel of contending sects, the false individualism in religion which makes every member of Christ a law unto himself, setting up the judgement of the individual or of his party against the rule of faith or the common order of the Church. The dream of an invisible Church on earth consisting only of the elect has in many minds taken the place of the fact of the existence of a great historical society which was instituted by Christ Himself.

Let it be considered for how much the conception of a Visible Church, the home of an invisible life, actually stands. We say that it has pleased God to carry forward the work of human salvation, which was made possible by the Incarnation of His Son and the coming of His Spirit, through a human Society based upon a nucleus of disciples who had been chosen and trained for that end by the Incarnate Son Himself. This society received from Jesus Christ authority to baptize and to teach all the nations of the earth, and was assured of His presence with it to the end of time. He gave it power to remit sins

and to retain them ; He gave it, in the person of His Apostle Peter, the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the right to bind and to loose, *i.e.* to form definite judgements in matters relating to doctrine and discipline.[1] All that is done or taught on earth in Christ's Name is, by His commission, to be done and taught by this visible and historically continuous society. To this Society belong the promise and gift of the Spirit, and all the spiritual blessings and privileges of the New Covenant ; it is the new Israel, the holy nation, the royal priesthood, the spiritual House for priestly service, the Church or Congregation of the Living God. There is not the shadow of a reason for ascribing the glorious things which are spoken of the City of God to an invisible body known only to God and distinct from the visible Society. The unworthiness, hypocrisy, insincerity, spiritual deadness of multitudes of Christians, and even at certain epochs of Church history of the great majority (if the fact be so), cannot take from the privileges of the Visible Church, which are secured by Christ's promise to be with her to the world's end.

To those who believe the Visible Church to be the heir of that promise, nothing which pertains to her order, her ministry, her worship, her life, or her

[1] On 'binding' and 'loosing' (Matt. xvi. 19, xviii. 18), see John Lightfoot, *ad loc.* ; Dalman, *Words of Christ* (Eng. tr.), p. 213 ff., or Allen, *St. Matthew*, p. 177.

work can seem to be of little moment. In a Divine Society even external things are the veil of heavenly realities. To imagine that this conviction leads of itself to externalism and formality is as unintelligent as it is wanting in charity. On the contrary, belief in the Divine Mission and supernatural life of the Visible Church invests all that belongs to her with spiritual significance and power, inspiring us with a new sense of the reality of all acts of Christian worship and fellowship. We awake out of our sleep to exclaim with Jacob, "This is none other but the House of God, and this is the gate of Heaven."

It is a false spirituality which thinks lightly of the visible order of the Church, on the ground that our Lord desires only the salvation of the individual and the religion of the heart. A true faith in the Master welcomes and follows His method of working, which is to gather individuals into a visible society, in which by His invisible grace they may be educated for the life of the world to come.

6. The Visible Church of Christ is indefectible. The edifice which our Lord builds on the Rock of truth cannot fall, nor can the building cease until it is complete; "the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."[1]

[1] "A pictorial way of saying, 'The organized processes of evil shall not prevail against the organized society which represents my teaching'" (Allen, *op. cit.*). But Hades answers to the power of death and destruction rather than to those of moral evil.

Forces of destruction, which sooner or later undermine all human societies, commonwealths, empires, may also attack the Universal Church. But they attack it in vain. The rain descends, the floods come, the winds beat upon the House of God, but it remains unshaken. There are things that cannot be shaken, and the Catholic Church is one of them.[1]

Particular churches share this note of indefectibility so long and in so far as they share the other notes of the One Church. So long, so far as they reflect her unity, her sanctity, her catholicity, her apostolicity, her combination of the visible order with the spiritual life, they are imperishable. On the other hand, if a local church, even a church planted by an Apostle or by the two greatest Apostles, and possessing the succession of the Apostolic ministry, leaves its first love and ceases from its first works, Christ, we know, will move its lamp out of its place ;[2] the light of truth will be transferred to some other region, to a city or a nation bringing forth the fruit of the Spirit. Against such a community the gates of Hades, the forces of disintegration, will prevail, and the whole neighbourhood may be relinquished for centuries. But though the lamp is removed out of its place, it is not extinguished : the light of the world shines on.

The indestructibility of the Catholic Church is the indestructibility of goodness and truth, of which she

[1] Heb. xii. 27 f. [2] Apoc. ii. 4 f.

is the Divinely ordained home and citadel on earth. The Church is "the pillar and base of the truth"[1]—the pillar standing up against the sky, and witnessing to the truth from age to age; the base or drum which supports the shaft and capital, itself resting on a hidden substructure and upon the rock. Centuries go by, and lesser edifices raised by human hands disappear, giving place to others which in due time will themselves fall into ruins; but this pillar, capital and shaft and base, is still in its place, and there it will remain while the world lasts. The foundation of God stands to-day where it stood when the New Testament was written; its witness is still borne and will be borne to the end, in the faith and life of Christendom.

Does this indefectibility of the Catholic Church imply immunity from error? is the witness of the Church infallible? At first sight it might seem as if infallibility were a logical consequence of indefectibility. If the Church can depart from the truth when she professes to define it, what safeguard is there against her complete collapse?

Another promise from Christ supplies the answer. "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth."[2] To attain to the whole truth is a Divine gift, and this gift is guaranteed to the

[1] 1 Tim. iii. 15 *στύλος καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας.*

[2] John xvi. 13 *ὁδηγήσει ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν ἀλήθειαν πᾶσαν.*

Apostles as representing the universal Church. But it is important to observe the terms in which it is conveyed. The Spirit of truth does not communicate all the truth at once, nor does He undertake to guard the Church from error during the process of attaining it. It is His to lead, but the Church is responsible for following her Guide; and it is only as she does this that she escapes error and assimilates truth. Ultimate attainment is assured to her, but not inerrancy in the course of her progress towards it; there may be many mishaps upon the way through misapprehension or neglect.

The Church, then, has no right to expect immunity from error. But she may confidently look for Divine guidance when she seeks it, and follows it as it is given. How is this guidance bestowed?

The well-known Vincentian canon offers in an epigrammatic form some approach to an answer;[1] at least it asserts a principle on which judgements pronounced by the Church may be regarded as beyond reasonable doubt. *Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus*: *i.e.* a doctrine which the Church has accepted in all ages and in all parts of the world, and which has been endorsed by the general consent of Christendom, may be safely assumed to be part of that sum total of truth into which she is being guided by the Spirit of Christ. It may be difficult to find

[1] See Stanton, *Authority in Religion*, p. 167 f.

instances of this *consensus*, if Vincent's canon is pressed to the letter; but the general principle of the rule is sound, and easy of application. Agreement in matters of faith and life, when it has been reached by the great majority of Christian people of all races and ages, can only be explained as due to the action of the One Spirit, who dwells in the One Body of Christ. A truly oecumenical Council, representing all the catholic churches of Christendom, may reasonably expect the guidance of the Holy Spirit; and to Councils so constituted great deference is due. This was duly recognized by the sixteenth century Reformers of the English church.[1] Our 21st Article, indeed, says plainly that "General Councils may err," and it is not denied that even in the great Councils of the fourth and fifth centuries unedifying scenes were witnessed, and errors of judgement may have been committed. But the chief theological decisions of these representative assemblies of an undivided Christendom may nevertheless be regarded as the work of the Spirit of truth. They have become part of the Christian heritage; they satisfy the Christian consciousness, and they correspond with the experience of the whole Church.

[1] Thus the *Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum* (c. 1552), c. i. speaking of Councils, says: "quaedam illorum, qualia sunt praecipua illa quatuor, Nicaenum, Constantinopolitanum primum, Ephesinum, et Chalcedonense, magna cum reverentia complectimur et suscipimus." Cf. Hooker, *E.P.* i. 40. 14; v. 54. 10.

No oecumenical Council is possible in a divided Christendom. But the last century witnessed an attempt to bring together under that name representatives of the Roman obedience from all parts of the world, and to use its authority for the setting up of a new criterion of truth. The Roman Catechism, prepared in accordance with a decree of the Council of Trent, had been content to say that the "One Church, because governed by the Holy Ghost, cannot err in delivering the discipline of faith and morals."[1] This, as we have seen, is in excess of our Lord's promise, which guarantees to the Church no more than a progressive guidance into the whole truth. But the Vatican Council of 1870 adds that the inerrancy of the Church attaches to certain utterances of its visible head, the Roman Pontiff;[2] when the Pope speaks *ex cathedra*, *i.e.* "when in discharge of his office of Pastor and Doctor of all Christians he defines, in virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority, a doctrine of faith or morals to be held by the universal Church, he is, through the Divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, endued with that infallibility with which our blessed Redeemer willed that the Church should be furnished in defining doctrines of faith or morals."

It is well known that this definition was carried

[1] *Catech. R.* i. x. qu. 17.

[2] Martin, *Conc. Vatic. documentorum collectio*, p. 26.

against the advice of some of the ablest and wisest members of the Roman Episcopate. Moreover, it was carried in a Council which did not represent any communion but that of Rome, and has therefore no binding force in the Catholic Church. Lastly, it is so worded that it may be doubted whether the infallibility claimed for the Pope can ever be exercised. For it is claimed for him only when he speaks as the Pastor and Doctor of all Christians, and it is only such an infallibility as the Redeemer willed to bestow upon the Church. But the great Orthodox Church and the Anglican Church, not to mention the Protestant sects, deny that the Pope is the Pastor and Doctor of all Christians; and there is no sufficient evidence to shew that our Lord promised infallibility either to Peter or his successors, or even to the whole Church. Thus the new Papal infallibility stands in no relation to the Catholic note of indefectibility. The great oecumenical Councils, and any future truly oecumenical Council, may rightly claim the attention of Christendom; a purely Roman Council concerns only the Roman communion, and the utterances of a single bishop, even if he claim infallibility, are authoritative only within the limits of his own diocese or province.

Though the Universal Church cannot fail, it is only in the long run that she is safeguarded from the risk of error. The leading of the Spirit is

gradual, and there may be many set-backs to progress, and even serious departures from the right way. Councils may err, majorities may vote for that which in the end will prove to be an *ignis fatuus*. At one dark moment in the fourth century, to use the words of Jerome, "the whole world groaned, and marvelled to find itself Arian."[1] At another, in the first century, St Peter, whose infallibility is thought to have descended to the Roman Pontiff, "stood condemned," and received a public reproof from St Paul.[2] It seems that neither the *consensus* of a particular age, nor the *ipse dixit* of a supreme Pastor or Doctor, has the promise of inerrancy. The promise of the infallible Spirit belongs to the Catholic Church, and not to one age of the Church or to one communion, however ancient or widely spread it may be.

Yet there is no reason to fear that error will ultimately triumph over truth, or that the Body of Christ will ever fall, as a whole, from the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. The intellectual difficulties of our own time will no more prevail against the Church than did the Arianism of the fourth century, at one time sure of its ultimate triumph. The Church is not infallible, but she is

[1] Hieron. *dial. adv. Lucif.* 19 "tunc (*i.e.* in the year 360) Nicaenae fidei damnatio conclamata est; ingemuit totus orbis, et Arianum se esse miratus est."

[2] Gal. ii. 11.

indefectible, because she has to the end the unfailing guidance of the Spirit of truth, even if she does not always follow her Guide. *Magna est Veritas, et praevalet.*[1]

[1] 1 Esdras iv. 41 (LXX) μεγάλη ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ὑπερισχύει. The future tense, commonly adopted in quotations, is without authority either in the Greek or the Latin text.

II

THE CHURCH IN ITS LIFE, ORDER, AND FUNCTIONS

1. The Church, as represented in the New Testament, is a living organism: a body permeated in all its limbs by a vital force; a tree whose branches draw sap from a common root; a house built of living stones. Whatever the image used to describe the Ecclesia, its outstanding feature is vitality. There may be dead members in the body, dead branches in the tree, dead stones in the building; but their presence is abnormal and temporary. A whole Christian community, the local representative of the Universal Church, may be dead; yet so long as it still calls itself a 'church,' it bears a name which speaks of life.[1]

The life of the Church is spiritual. When St Peter speaks of the members of the Church as 'living stones,'[2] he is thinking not only of the fact that the

[1] Apoc. iii. 1 ὄνομα ἔχεις ὅτι ζῇς.

[2] 1 Pet. ii. 4: see Dr. Hort's instructive note *ad loc.*

Church is made up of men, women, and children, who possess the gift of physical life, but of the supernatural life which their faith has infused into them. Similarly, when St Paul contrasts the dead victims offered under the Law with the living sacrifices which believers present to God, he does not forget that the bodies of Christians are "those of men to whom newness of spiritual life has been given by union with the risen Christ."[1] The vast majority of the members of Christ have passed out of the present life; yet they are "alive unto God," and retain their place in the spiritual building.

The life of the Church proceeds from its living Head, the exalted Christ. "Because I live," He had said on the night before the Passion, "ye shall live also."[2] What is true of the members is true also of the body. From the Head, in St Paul's words, "all the body, fitly framed and knit together . . . maketh increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love" . . . "increaseth with the increase of God."[3] As each several member of the Church receives spiritual life from the vital energy of Christ, so the Church as

[1] Sanday and Headlam on Rom. xii. 1. [2] John xiv. 19.

[3] Eph. iv. 16, Col. ii. 19. The *ἁφαὶ καὶ σύνδεσμοι*, "contacts and ligaments," whatever they may be, have only a secondary value; they "perform their part in making the body one, in keeping it together; its nourishment, its increasing strength, depend on a something greater; they wholly derive from the Head" (F. B. Westcott, *Letter to Asia*, p. 127).

a whole owes her growth, which is the surest sign of life, to the supply that streams from the ascended Lord. The members of the Body differ in the measure of their appropriation of the supernatural life, and some fail to appropriate it at all; but the Body can never cease to be in communication with the Head, and thus it continually grows towards the fulness of the mystical Christ.[1]

The spiritual life of the Visible Church is normally conveyed through sacramental channels; the gift is marked by visible signs. The Incarnation has consecrated matter, making it the expression and the vehicle of the spiritual.[2] Our Lord in the days of His flesh freely used outward things as signs of His invisible working. He wrought His miracles, not always but perhaps ordinarily, through visible signs; laying His hands on the sick, touching the lepers, anointing the eyes of the blind with clay made with saliva from His mouth, and bidding the sufferer "go, wash in the pool of Siloam"; permitting the crowds to touch the border of His garment, with the result that as many as touched were made whole.[3] It may be said that these were helps to faith, and such no doubt they were; but they were also means in the use of which He willed to communicate the virtue that

[1] Cf. Eph. i. 23, iv. 13.

[2] See Bp F. Paget in *Lux Mundi*, Essay x., and Illingworth, *Divine Immanence*, c. vi.

[3] Mark vi. 5; Matt. viii. 3; John ix. 7; Mark vi. 56.

flowed from His incarnate life. Moreover, the Lord encouraged His Apostles to use similar means in His Name, such as anointing the sick with oil, and laying their hands upon them.[1] And both He and they employed visible signs to convey the greatest spiritual gifts. He breathed on them when He gave them the Holy Spirit for the fulfilment of their mission to the world. He lifted up His hands in blessing when He parted from them at the Ascension. He sent the other Paraclete to the Church under the signs of rushing wind, and fire breaking from a common centre and settling on every head.[2] The Apostles laid their hands on the Seven, when they set them apart for the work of their ministry; and on the baptized, that they might receive the Holy Ghost.[3] Others, not Apostles, used like sacramental signs. The prophets and teachers of the Church at Antioch laid their hands on Barnabas and Saul, before they sent them away to their mission in Gentile lands. In the Jewish Christian communities addressed by St James the elders of the church anointed the sick with oil in the name of the Lord, as the Apostles had done by Christ's command in the villages of Galilee.[4] Gospels, Acts, Epistles shew us the sacramental principle everywhere at work.

[1] Mark v. 30, vi. 13, 'xvi.' 18.

[2] John xx. 22; Luke xxiv. 50; Acts ii. 2 f.

[3] Acts vi. 6, viii. 17, xix. 6. [4] Acts xiii. 3; James v. 14.

In two instances Christ committed to His disciples sacramental institutions which are essential to the life of the Church: the one being the means of admission into the Body of Christ, and the other cementing the fellowship for which the Body exists.

The life of the Church has its beginning in the Sacrament of Baptism. From one point of view Christian Baptism is a death and burial; our old man was in this initiatory Sacrament buried with Christ, that the body of sin might be done away. But the baptismal death is immediately followed by the baptismal resurrection; we rise again with the risen Lord to newness of life.[1] This new life is corporate; "in One Spirit were we all baptized into One Body"; putting on Christ in Baptism, we are henceforth "one man in Christ Jesus." Baptism is a second birth which admits us into the supernatural life of the Body of Christ.[2]

If the other great Sacrament of the Gospel is less often mentioned in the New Testament, its importance to the life of the Church is certainly not estimated less highly. From the Acts and Epistles we learn incidentally that the chief purpose of the weekly gathering which the Apostolic churches held on the day of the Resurrection was to break the

[1] Rom. vi. 3 ff.; Col. ii. 12, iii. 1.
[2] 1 Cor. xii. 13; Gal. iii. 27 f.; Tit. iii. 5 f.

Bread and drink the Cup of the Eucharist.[1] That Bread and that Cup were understood to be a communion of the Body and the Blood of the Lord, and the bond of Christian fellowship; "we, who are many are one bread, one body; for we all partake of the One Bread."[2] How great was the significance of the act of communion is made clear by the solemn words in which St Paul condemns unworthy recipients.[3] Yet the full meaning of this Sacrament and its great place in the life of the Church were scarcely realized until the second century began to take stock of its Apostolic heritage. With fuller light on the Incarnation of the Word there came a deeper insight into the mystery of the Bread and Cup of the Lord. Thus Justin, in an apology addressed to a heathen Emperor about the year 150, can boldly say: "As Jesus Christ our Saviour was by the Word of God incarnate, and took flesh and blood for our salvation, so the food which is eucharistically blessed by prayer based on the word that came from Him, is, we have been taught to believe, the flesh and blood of the Incarnate Jesus."[4] Irenaeus propounds a theory of the Eucharist which is not materially different from Justin's: "bread, which comes from the earth, when it receives the invocation of God, is no longer common

[1] Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xi. 20. [2] 1 Cor. x. 17.

[3] 1 Cor. xi. 27 ff.

[4] Justin M. *apol.* i. 66. On δι' εὐχῆς λόγου τοῦ παρ' αὐτοῦ, see *J. T. S.* iii. p. 170, note 2.

bread, but Eucharist, consisting of two things, an earthly and a heavenly. The earthly elements, receiving the word of God, become the Eucharist, which is the Body and Blood of Christ." "Our bodies, nourished by the Eucharist, though laid in the earth and resolved into it, will rise in due time, the Word of God vouchsafing them a resurrection."[1] In the familiar phrase of our English Prayerbook, the Body and Blood of the risen Christ, given and received in the Sacrament, preserve the bodies and souls of the faithful unto everlasting life. Not only is the Church here on earth thereby knit together in one communion and fellowship, but the union thus cemented extends into the Resurrection life of the world to come. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood," the Lord has said, "hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day"; "as I live because of the Father, so he that eateth me, he also shall live because of me."[2] The words were spoken, of course, with reference to the spiritual or heavenly food, which is received by faith; but the Eucharist is the appointed means of receiving it. That it is not the exclusive means, the Church of England plainly confesses;[3] yet the fact remains that the Lord has clearly willed to convey this great gift ordinarily through a sacramental rite. It is Christ

[1] Irenaeus, *haer.* iv. 18. 5, v. 5. 3. [2] John vi. 54, 57.
[3] In the rubric attached to the Communion of the Sick.

Himself who points us to this bread and this cup, and says, "This is my body"; "this is my blood."

The life of the Visible Church is sacramental, as her visibility demands. It is usual to say that sacraments will disappear in a higher state; and that this is true of our present sacraments may be gathered from the fact that their outward signs belong to the material world, and must vanish with it. But perhaps it is overbold to say that the sacramental principle will no longer operate when that which is perfect is come. For the Incarnate Life, as we believe, knows no end, and the body, under spiritual conditions, will find a place in the future life of the saints. In these circumstances it does not seem improbable that effectual signs of grace, such as will appeal to us as we shall then be constituted, may accompany the perpetual flow of the Divine life into the souls and bodies of the blessed. It may be that the imagery of the Apocalypse, so far as it relates to the future life, is not wholly symbolical; that the glories of the Holy City, with its streets of pure gold, its rivers of the water of life, its tree of life yielding seasonable fruit month by month, the writing of the Divine Name on the foreheads of the victorious, the hidden manna given them to eat, the white stone bearing an inscription that no stranger can read, the new song, sung to harps of God, that none can learn but the redeemed from the earth, and much else

which it is beyond our present power to interpret,—it may be that these or some of these will find their explanation in the things that eye hath not seen nor ear heard, by which our Lord in the great age that is coming will shew His glory and communicate His grace to those who are admitted to be with Him where He is.

But whether this shall be so or not, whether or not the spiritual life of the future, like that of the present Church, shall be maintained by sacramental signs and acts adapted to the needs of the spiritual body, it is certain that the Church will then as now derive its life from its Incarnate Head. This is the privilege of the Holy Catholic Church; to her belongs the supernatural life of grace that comes from Jesus Christ. "Where the Church is," as Irenaeus long ago witnessed, "there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church and all grace." "All who do not have recourse to the Church are not partakers of the Spirit; they defraud themselves of life."[1] Irenaeus was thinking of the Gnostic sects, and his words do not apply to those who hold the faith of the Church, and have been baptized with the baptism of the Spirit, although they do not share with us in the privilege of Catholic fellowship. It is to be thankfully acknowledged that the Holy Spirit works in communities which do not

[1] Iren. *haer.* iii. 24. 1 f.

follow the ways of the historical Church. Nevertheless it is as members by Baptism of the Body of Christ that separated Christians draw from the Head the life of the Spirit, and not as members of non-catholic societies. The One Spirit is, as in the days of Irenaeus, or in the days of St Paul, the gift of Christ to the One Church, and the source of her corporate life.

2. As a great society the Church demands organization. Life is her first necessity, but order is not far behind. Vitality without order runs to waste, expending itself to little purpose or even with mischievous results.

In the Body of Christ, as St Paul has warned us,[1] there is a variety of functions, and they are divided in an orderly manner among its several parts. All members have not the same duty to perform; all have been made to drink of the same Spirit, but all have not the same gifts of the Spirit or the same work. Some members of Christ are the feet of the mystical Body, some the hands, some the eyes, some the ears; while others fulfil more obscure offices, which nevertheless are not less needful to the good estate of the Body. Such distinctions arise partly from a variety of personal gifts, natural or

[1] Rom. xii. 4 *τὰ δὲ μέλη πάντα οὐ τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχει πρᾶξιν*, "have not the same activity, the same function"; 1 Cor. xii. 4 ff.

spiritual; partly from official positions. Even in the first age there were Divinely appointed Church officers. God in His providence, Christ by His Spirit, had called some to be Apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers.[1] By the middle of the first century there was already in the Church the nucleus of an organized ministry, and a flock to which it ministered; there were in the Christian Society those who taught and those who learnt, those who ruled and those whose duty it was to obey; those who were fathers in the House of God, and those who were their children in the faith.[2]

Our Lord, who created the organism, left also a basis for the organization of its life-work. He left the Apostolate, trained by the *Pastor pastorum*, and furnished with the gift of His Spirit; and He committed to them the whole business of carrying on the evangelization of the world. In that commission the work of providing such organization as might be found necessary was involved. In Acts we see the process going forward: first, the appointment of the Seven to relieve the Twelve of the less spiritual part of their work at Jerusalem: then the rise of the Christian presbyterate, both in Jerusalem, and after-

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 28 οὓς μὲν ἔθετο ὁ θέος κτλ.; Eph. iv. 11 αὐτὸς (sc. ὁ χριστός) ἔδωκεν τοὺς μέν κτλ.

[2] Gal. vi. 5; 1 Thess. v. 10; Heb. xii. 7; 1 Tim. iii. 5.

wards in the new Gentile churches.[1] In St Paul's list of ministries such local officers are briefly classed as "helps" and "governments," or as "pastors and teachers."[2] They were overshadowed in the first days by the preponderant authority of Apostles, prophets, and evangelists, and other possessors of special gifts. The *Didache* and the *Shepherd* shew us these temporary ministries beginning to fall into disrepute, while the local presbyter-bishops and deacons are stepping into their place as worthy of equal honour.[3] The local ministry, however, still lacked leadership. In the mother church at Jerusalem, indeed, a leader had been found in James, the Lord's brother;[4] and in the church at Ephesus and the churches in Crete, St Paul, when a prisoner at Rome, had met the want for the moment by committing quasi-Apostolic authority to Timothy in the one case and Titus in the other.[5] In Asia, later on, St John seems to have found himself confronted by a self-constituted leader, who used his usurped authority to oppose the Apostle and excommunicate his friends.[6] Incidents such as this may have determined John to appoint

[1] Acts vi. 3, xi. 30, xiv. 23.

[2] 1 Cor. xii. 28 *ἀντιλήμψεις, κυβερνήσεις.* Eph. iv. 11 *τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους.*

[3] See *e.g. Didache*, xi. 15; Hermas, *mand.* 11. 1 ff.

[4] Acts xv. 13 ff., xxi. 18; Gal. ii. 9, 12.

[5] 1 Tim. i. 3 f., iii. 14 f.; Tit. i. 5.

[6] 3 John 9 f. *ὁ φιλοπρωτεύων αὐτῶν Διοτρέφης οὐκ ἐπιδέχεται ἡμᾶς.*

one of the presbyters in each of the cities in Asia to preside over the local church. Even from the first one of the presbyter-bishops must have presided at the weekly Eucharist,[1] and represented the Church in the distribution of the alms of the brethren, and when it had occasion to correspond with other local churches.[2] From such beginnings the monarchical episcopate probably had its origin in Asia first, and perhaps under St John, unless there is truth in the tradition that at Rome St Peter and St Paul appointed Linus as head of the Christian community in the capital.[3] At first the title 'bishop' may not have been given exclusively to these local presidents: in the New Testament, certainly, and in other early documents, 'bishop' and 'presbyter' appear to be almost convertible terms.[4] But it remains true that "from the Apostles' times there have

[1] Cf. Justin M. *apol.* i. 65 προσφέρεται τῷ προεστῶτι τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἄρτος κτλ. I prefer this to the view expressed in the text to Dr. Hamilton's contention (*People of God*, ii. p. 113 ff.) that the presbyter-bishops were originally appointed for the purpose of presiding at the Eucharist.

[2] Hermas, *vis.* ii. 4. 3.

[3] Iren. *haer.* iii. 2. 3 Λίνῳ τὴν τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς λειτουργίαν ἐνεχείρισαν. Yet, since Ignatius, writing to the Roman Church about 116, makes no reference to the Bishop, it is probable that the Roman president did not then exercise a monarchical episcopate or claim the exclusive title of Bishop. Dr. Hamilton (ii. p. 156 ff.) speaks more positively than I am able to do.

[4] In the N.T. "ἐπίσκοπος is not a title, but a description of the Elder's function" (Hort, *Ecclesia*, p. 252)'; cf. Acts xx. 17, 28; Tit. i. 5, 7.

been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church," [1] by whatever names they may have been known. And in Asia, at least, the three orders were known by their present names from the time of Ignatius. According to this martyr-bishop of the early years of the second century, the Bishop not only belongs to an order distinct from that of the Presbyter, but is the source of all ecclesiastical authority. "Let that be held to be a valid Eucharist," he writes, "which is under the Bishop or one to whom he shall commit it." "Apart from the Bishop it is not lawful either to baptize or to hold an agapé; but whatever he shall approve is to be accounted acceptable to God." [2] If members of the other orders, the presbyterate and diaconate, performed any official function, they did so with the Bishop's consent, and as acting in his stead. This exalted view of the Episcopate may have been at the time limited to the province of Asia; but before the end of the second century practically every church within the Empire had its bishop,[3] and each bishop was supreme in his own church. The bishop's 'monarchy,' no doubt, was limited and constitutionally exercised; but a monarchy by this time it certainly was, and no

[1] Preface to the English Ordinal. [2] Ignatius, *Smyrn.* 8.

[3] Lightfoot (*Christian Ministry*) points out that "episcopacy is so inseparably interwoven with all the traditions and beliefs of men like Irenaeus and Tertullian, that they betray no knowledge of a time when it was not."

longer a mere presidency in the council of his fellow-presbyters.

Yet the bishop's authority in the ante-Nicene Church extended no further than the local community over which he presided. Christ, as Ignatius taught, was the Bishop of the Universal Church.[1] It was a reproach to the bishop even of the greatest see in Christendom if he gave himself airs which earned for him the sarcastic title of *pontifex maximus*.[2] "None of us," exclaims Cyprian, "sets himself up as a bishop of bishops."[3] Yet the bishops of Christendom were not disconnected units, but formed, according to Cyprian, a college to which appeal might be made in matters of faith and discipline; the authority of every bishop was perfect in itself and independent, yet the members of the episcopate were not a mere agglomeration of authorities, but, as it were, share-holders in a joint property. The universal episcopate was representative of the universal Church, and capable of dealing, by common action, with the affairs of the Christian Society as a whole.[4] It must be confessed that this ideal has never yet been fully realized, and is perhaps unrealizable. A meeting of the whole

[1] Ignatius, *Smyrn. l.c.*

[2] Tertullian, *de pud.* 1 "pontifex scilicet maximus, quod est episcopus episcoporum."

[3] Cyprian, *sent. episc.* prooem. "neque enim quisquam nostrum 'episcopum' se 'episcoporum' constituit."

[4] Benson, *Cyprian*, pp. 182, 191.

episcopate was impossible so long as the Empire continued to be hostile to the Church, and Cyprian does not suggest it. Meetings of Bishops to take counsel with one another on questions affecting a particular neighbourhood or group of churches were held as early as the second century, and Cyprian made free use of this mode of securing conference and joint action among the Bishops of North Africa, who regarded him as their primate. The conversion of the Empire made oecumenical Councils possible, and with new powers of action there came abundant occasions for using them; Arianism and Macedonianism in the fourth century, Nestorianism and Eutychianism in the fifth, raised questions which could be settled only by the authority of the whole Church. Yet the oecumenicity of the Councils which determined them was scarcely more than nominal; the 318 bishops assembled at Nicaea fell far short of the whole episcopate;[1] the 150 at Constantinople were exclusively Easterns.[2] Neither then nor since has the Catholic episcopate met in its entirety, and at the present time the divisions of Christendom are a more effectual barrier to the assembling of a really oecumenical Council than the interference of a hostile State was in the age of persecution.

[1] See *Camb. Medieval History*, i. p. 13.

[2] The Council of 381 was "not properly General, but Eastern" (Bright, *Age of the Fathers*, i. p. 441). Cf. Stanley, *Eastern Church*, 70: "Not a single Western bishop was present."

Notwithstanding the inherent spiritual equality and independence of all members of the episcopal order, there have been from early times inequalities of rank within the episcopate. While all bishops are equal in point of order and spiritual power,[1] a special prestige and special privileges attached to the sees of certain great cities. The Council of Nicaea in 325 recognized on the ground of "ancient custom" three virtual patriarchates, at Alexandria, Antioch, and Rome.[2] Of the three, also by custom, Rome stood first, both as the church of the old capital of the Empire and as the foundation of the two greatest Apostles.[3] It is unnecessary to trace the steps by which this 'primacy' was converted into a supremacy between the fourth and sixth centuries. The change was largely due to the policy of certain great Popes who occupied the Roman see during this period. Men like Damasus, Leo, Gregory, were not content with primacy. Gregory I. was indeed far from claiming the powers which were claimed by Gregory VII., but he asserted quite unequivocally the spiritual supremacy of Rome. "To St Peter, the prince of the Apostles," he writes, "our Lord

[1] Jerome, *ep.* 146 "ubicumque fuerit episcopus . . . eiusdem meriti, eiusdem est sacerdotii."

[2] Conc. Nicaen. *can.* 6; Bright, *Canons of First Four Councils*, p. 20 ff.

[3] See Conc. Constantinop. *can.* 3; Conc. Chalced. *can.* 28, with Bright's notes.

committed the care of the whole Church.... If a bishop is charged with a fault, I know of no bishop who is not subject to the Apostolic chair."[1] The Vatican Council of 1870 merely gives the logical results of this teaching, when it defines the Pope as "the Head of the whole Church, the father and teacher of all Christians," and adds that all, pastors and faithful alike, are bound to obey his authority.[2] The Council protests that the powers of the supreme Pontiff in no way affect injuriously the jurisdiction of the bishops over their several flocks, but rather sustain and confirm it. But how little the dignity and independence of the Episcopate is, as a matter of fact, sustained and confirmed by the supremacy of the Pope is clear from the next paragraph, in which we read that the Roman Pontiff is supreme judge of the faithful, and that his judgement cannot be reformed or disputed by any; that, in effect, there is no appeal from his judgement even to an oecumenical Council.

It may of course be argued that the supremacy of a single bishop is the natural outcome of episcopacy. If each church must have its own head, why should not the Visible Church as a whole be under one visible Head?[3] Is not Papal supremacy the natural consequence of episcopal monarchy? The answer is

[1] See Dudden, *Gregory the Great*, ii. p. 411.

[2] Conc. Vatic. *sen.* 4, c. 3. [3] *Catech. Rom.* i. 10, 12.

that the Papacy is so far from crowning and consummating the edifice of diocesan episcopacy, that in fact it subverts it. It destroys the independence of the diocesan bishop, interfering at every turn with his right to guide and rule his own diocese. Even the metropolitans of the Roman communion are the vassals of the Pope. But subordination to a supreme authority other than that of Christ Himself is fatal to the primitive conception of the episcopal office. Cyprian, who supposed that the Lord founded His Church on Peter in order that it might "begin with unity," saw clearly that a headship attributed to the successor of one among the Apostles would simply break down the whole theory of the unity and the authority which subsisted in the one episcopate;[1] and when a Bishop of Rome interfered with the freedom of the North African Church, he resisted his authority and refused to submit.[2] Papal supremacy was certainly not evolved from the Cyprianic doctrine of the episcopate, but in defiance of it.

Yet if we reject the supremacy of the Pope, while at the same time we recognize the impossibility in present circumstances of convening a truly oecumenical Council which could represent the judgement of the whole Episcopate, is not this to confess

[1] Benson, *Cyprian*, 196 f.

[2] Cyprian, *ep.* lxxiv. Cf. *sent. episc.* prooem., where Cyprian lays down the principle that every bishop has "pro licentia libertatis et potestatis suae arbitrium proprium."

that the organization of the Catholic Church is incomplete, and the recovery of her lost unity impracticable?

For the time, it must be acknowledged, the vision of a united Christendom has been wrecked by the Papacy. The Papacy is ultimately responsible both for the breaking away of the Orthodox Church from the communion of the West and for the revolution that shattered the unity of the West itself. It may be taken as certain that unity will never be restored on the basis of Papal supremacy. Nor does experience favour any attempt to form a fresh centre of unity. The ancient system of grouping churches in provinces under metropolitical and patriarchal sees has not been found to interfere unduly with the freedom of the diocesan episcopate; even the creation of fresh patriarchates may become expedient; but a Headship of universal Christendom would be equally subversive of peace and liberty whether it had its seat at Constantinople or at Canterbury, at Moscow or at Rome. Such an endeavour to give logical completeness to the organization of the Church can only end either in speedy failure or in the creation of a spiritual autocracy. For the present, at least, the hope of an approach to reunion lies not so much in the increase of organization or the remodelling of that which we now possess, as in the informal drawing together of the separated units of Christ's Body. There are

signs on all hands of such efforts. It is more than possible that one of the results of the present gigantic struggle in Europe may be a distinct advance towards union between the great Russian communion and our own. Within our own borders there has been for some time a growing endeavour among all schools of thought to understand each other's point of view, and to co-operate in the common life of the Church. Outside our communion the gathering of the non-conformist societies under a "Free Church Council," and the reunion, partly accomplished, of the Presbyterian bodies in North Britain, are indications of the same desire to bring scattered forces together. Meanwhile the Anglican Episcopate has formulated the basis of ultimate unity. In the famous Lambeth 'quadrilateral'[1] the Bishops have stated clearly and frankly the minimum which the non-episcopal bodies will be asked to accept if at any time they are led to desire federation with the historical Church.

There is room no doubt for improvement in the organization of our own Church. We need Convocations more fully representative of the clergy, and

[1] The name has been given for the sake of brevity to the four articles which the Lambeth Conference of 1888 adopted as "the basis on which approach may be by God's blessing made towards Home Reunion"; viz. the Holy Scriptures as containing all things necessary to salvation; the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds; the two Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself; the Historic Episcopate. The full text of the resolution may be seen in *The Lambeth Conferences* (S.P.C.K., 1896), p. 280 f.

with more liberty of action; a House of Laymen with power to take its proper part in the business of the Church; an extended episcopate and restored diaconate; a priesthood more fully trained and equipped for spiritual work, and better qualified to deal with the intellectual problems of the age. In public worship we want more freedom, more power to adapt our ministrations to the needs of a great Empire and to the circumstances of our mission churches among the heathen.

But it is possible to exaggerate the importance of organization. Organization is important because the efficiency of the Church, as of every other great society, largely depends upon it. Yet the Church is primarily a spiritual body, and her true life is hid in a sphere which is beyond the reach of external things. The organization of the Church, it is always to be remembered, exists for the sake of her spiritual life, and not her spiritual life for the sake of her organization, however admirable and effective that may be.

3. The Church, like its prototype, the older Israel, is "a royal priesthood," "a spiritual house designed for holy acts of priestly service." To Israel at Sinai it was said, "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests." St Peter claims this promise for the Church,

and thrice in the Apocalypse St John emphasizes this function of the Christian Ecclesia. "He hath made us to be a kingdom, priests unto his God and Father;" "thou madest them unto our God a kingdom and priests;" "they shall be priests of God and of Christ."[1]

A sacerdotal character belongs to the whole Body of Christ, pastors and people alike. Its members have been individually consecrated to the royal priesthood by Baptism and the laying on of hands, by which the Spirit is given for the service of the Christian life.[2] The priesthood of the laity, or to speak more correctly, the common priesthood of all believers, laymen or clerics, belongs to the essence of the Christian character. There are, indeed, special priestly offices which distinguish the orders of the Ministry, just as within the priestly nation the tribe of Levi and the family of Aaron were dedicated to the special service of the Tabernacle, which they performed on behalf of their brethren. Each of the "divers orders," which the "Giver of all good gifts" has "appointed in His Church," is conveyed by a fresh laying on of hands, accompanied by fresh gifts of the Spirit.[3] But the orders of the Ministry

[1] Exod. xix. 5f.; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Apoc. i. 6, v. 10, xx. 6.

[2] See Bp Chase, *Confirmation in the Apostolic Age*, p. 111f.

[3] See the remarks of Dr. Mason, *Relation of Confirmation to Baptism*, p. 462: "Each successive laying on of hands conveys from God a fresh development of the Spirit's indwelling forces."

are extensions or specializations of the common priestly service, rather than a new hierarchy. The whole Church is a hierarchy, divided into orders, to each of which particular duties are allotted.[1]

The work of the common Christian priesthood claims the whole of the baptized life, including all its occupations. This is a principle affirmed by the Apostolic writers with the utmost clearness and emphasis. "I beseech you," St Paul writes to the Romans, "to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."[2] Nearly every word here is borrowed from the language of the Levitical ritual of sacrifice, which is thus applied to the conduct of the ordinary Christian life. "Whether ye eat or drink," the same Apostle says to the Corinthians, "or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."[3] Here the terms employed are not sacrificial, but the import is the same, viz. that in the Christian body the commonest and least spiritual acts of daily life belong to the service of God. The Christian priesthood exists, as St Peter teaches, for the purpose of offering up spiritual sacrifices, the nature of which is sufficiently clear from the words that follow: "that ye may shew forth the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His

[1] Cf. Clem. Rom. 1 Cor. 40 f. [2] Rom. xii. 1.
[3] 1 Cor. x. 31.

marvellous light . . ." ; " having your behaviour seemly among the Gentiles, that . . . they may by your good works, which they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." [1] There is much more to the same effect. It is evident that in the judgement of the Apostle the priestly service of the Church consists largely in the offering to God of all the pursuits of life, and that nothing in the intercourse of Christians with the world or among themselves is too trivial to take its place among the sacrifices which they are bidden to present to the Father through His Son Jesus Christ.

Besides this continual but informal exercise of their priesthood, the Christian body is called to perform certain definitely religious acts. The writer to the Hebrews exhorts Christians to " offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is (he explains), the fruit of lips which make confession to his name " ; adding, " But to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." [2] Both thanksgiving and almsgiving have a high place assigned to them among the offerings of the Church. These and all other spiritual sacrifices find their chief corporate expression in the Church's commemoration of the Sacrifice of the death of Christ. In the Apostolic Church the Eucharist was celebrated at the weekly gathering of

[1] 1 Peter ii. 9, 12.

[2] Heb. xiii. 15 f. ; cf. Westcott's note on *θυσία αἰνέσεως*.

the faithful,[1] which at once looked back to the Lord's Resurrection, and anticipated the final gathering at His Return.[2] At this weekly assembly supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings were offered;[3] a common religious meal, known as the Agapé, or Love-feast,[4] was shared by all the brethren, and alms were collected for the relief of sick and needy members of the Church.[5] The whole service was crowned, as it appears, by the breaking of the Bread which the Lord had identified with His Body, and the blessing of the Cup which He had called His Blood. To partake of that Bread and that Cup was an act analogous to partaking of sacrifices offered on Jewish and Gentile altars.[6] The next century saw in the Eucharist the pure *mincha* or meat-offering which, Malachi foretold, should one day be offered by the whole Gentile world.[7] The Eucharist was henceforth pre-eminently the Christian Sacrifice, at

[1] Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xi. 20.

[2] ἐπισυναγωγή is used both of the weekly and the final gathering: Heb. x. 25, 2 Thess. ii. 1.

[3] 1 Tim. ii. 1; cf. Justin M. *apol.* i. 67 ὁ προεστὼς εὐχὰς ὁμοίως καὶ εὐχαριστίας . . . ἀναπέμπει.

[4] See oń this Keating, *Agapé and Eucharist.*

[5] Justin, *l.c.*

[6] See 1 Cor. x. 18 ff.

[7] Mal. i. 11, where the LXX render מִנְחָה by *θυσία*. A group of early Christian writers, regarding Mal. *l.c.* as a prophecy of the Eucharist, speak of the latter as the *θυσία καθαρά* of the Church: see *Didache*, 14; Justin, *dial.* 41, 117; Irenaeus, iv. 18. 1; Tertullian, *adv. Marc.* iii. 22. For further particulars see *J. T. S.* iii. 164 f.

once a symbolical oblation to the Creator of the fruits of the earth, and a memorial of the sacrifice offered on the Cross. In the third century the latter view preponderated, and 'to offer the Sacrifice,' or simply 'to sacrifice,' is Cyprian's normal phrase for the act of celebrating the Eucharist.[1]

With these deeper views of the significance of the Eucharist offering, greater care was bestowed on the liturgical expression of the act. It seems probable that the third century saw the compilation of the oldest of the 'Church Orders'—a series of attempts to provide, among other things, for the orderly celebration of the holy mysteries. In the second century Justin describes an order of Eucharistic worship which in its general plan is essentially that of the later liturgies; but in other respects the service is still of the simplest kind, and the President offers prayers and thanksgivings to the best of his ability; there are as yet no set forms of prayer even in that most solemn part of the office which is now known as the 'canon.'[2] But in the third and fourth centuries, as the Church Orders shew, Eucharistic devotion was already taking a stereotyped form; moreover, certain accessories, such as the wearing of a special dress[3] by the celebrant and his

[1] See *Studia Biblica*, iv. p. 266 ff., and cf. Cypr. *ep.* lxiii. 17.

[2] Justin, *apol.* i. 67 ὁ προεστὼς εὐχὰς . . . ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ ἀναπέμπει. *Didache*, 10 τοῖς δὲ προφήταις ἐπιτρέπετε εὐχαριστεῖν ὅσα θέλουσιν.

[3] Bp Maclean, *Ancient Church Orders*, p. 64 f.

assistants, the use of incense,[1] the ministry of the deacons, are now coming into view; and we note the extreme care taken that not a crumb of the Eucharistic bread shall fall to the ground.[2] The erection of worthy Church buildings had begun before the last persecution, and it proceeded apace after the conversion of Constantine; in the great basilicas of imperial Christianity the Eucharistic offering was surrounded by a magnificence which corresponded to the new position of the Christian Church.[3] As time passed on, and in the growing darkness of the early Middle Age lower and less spiritual views prevailed, the tendency was to exaggerate the importance of ceremonial, and Art itself suffered through the degradation of worship. A natural reaction brought to us in England the bareness and ugliness of Puritan services, and these conditions were reflected in many of our Anglican churches until the middle of the last century. In our own time the more important of the reforms in ritual inaugurated by the Oxford Tracts have been widely accepted by nearly all schools within the Church of England; the highest act of Christian worship has recovered among us its old pre-eminence, and we have

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 168. [2] Eusebius, *H.E.* viii. 1.

[3] Chrysostom *e.g.* speaks of silver altars and jewelled altar and vessels (Srawley, *Early History of the Liturgy*, p. 90); cf. Lowrie, *Christian Art*, p. 340 ff. On the Church's use of Art, see Westcott, *Epistles of St. John*, p. 333 ff., esp. p. 374 f.

witnessed a welcome return to the seemly order of the ancient worship, and in some respects an advance upon it. Once more the royal priesthood of the Church and the dignity of her great offering are expressed in outward act, so far as external things can express the spiritual and eternal. Our care must now be to preserve a due proportion between these two elements in public worship, using ritual and its accompaniments as means to an end, helps to the realizing of our oneness with the heavenly worship which is behind the veil. In the Apocalypse the courts of the Holy City blaze with monoliths of many colours and vast pearls, and its streets are of pure gold; yet the inhabitants suffer no distraction from the glories that surround them. "His servants shall do Him service, and they shall see His face, and His Name shall be in their foreheads."[1] So long as the heart is set on God and on Christ, ritual and other accessories take their proper place in worship, and assist devotion; but in our present imperfect state encroachments of the material upon the spiritual need to be constantly checked, and the spirituality of worship must be jealously maintained. It is the first condition of acceptable Church worship that it be spiritual; the second is that in its outward form it be as worthy of the Great Object of worship as circumstances permit, and as reverence and love can make it.

[1] Apoc. xxii. 3 f.

4. The primary work of the Church as a priestly body is worship. Hence the Divine Office or Service of the Hours was anciently known as the *Opus Dei*, and the services severally were called *Divina opera*.[1] Yet even in the monastic life it was recognized that there was other work to be done for God beyond the observance of the Hours, and provision was made in the monasteries for study and for manual labour in the intervals between the daily offices. It was realized that work of brain and hand, undertaken for the glory of God or the good of men, is a kind of worship—*laborare est orare*—and a true part of the sacrifice which it is the privilege of the Church to offer to God through Christ.

The Church claims for God and consecrates to His service all work in life which is according to His will; she has a place for every calling which is not in itself evil. "As the Lord hath distributed to each man, as God hath called each, so let him walk." ... "Let each man abide in that calling wherein he was called."[2] Such was St Paul's rule for Christians who lived in the great heathen city of Corinth, whose callings were many, and some of them, no doubt, exposed the faithful to moral danger. His ruling involves the principle that the work of a Christian's life is work for Christ. The very slaves

[1] *Regula S. Benedicti* (ed. Amelli), 13, 22, 48.

[2] 1 Cor. vii. 17, 20, 24.

who were members of the Church were taught that they served the Lord Christ, who has given to every man in His great household work to be done for Him against His return.[1]

There are, however, certain specially Christian forms of work which the New Testament describes as "good"—works which indicate beauty or nobility of character,[2] or kindness and goodness of heart.[3] These are prompted by the Spirit of Christ and form the *raison d'être* of the new creation. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."[4] To five of the seven churches of the Apocalypse the message of Christ is, "I know thy works";[5] and by their works He judges them, and rewards or warns accordingly.

The first work of the Catholic Church is self-propagation. The Lord sent her into the world to fill the earth with a spiritual progeny. The handful of disciples whom He left behind Him were to multiply and grow till they overspread the whole of the creation. The mustard seed which He had planted was, by its own inherent life, to grow till it became a tree such that the birds could build their

[1] Col. iii. 24; Mark xiii. 34.

[2] ἔργα καλά (Matt. v. 16; 1 Tim. v. 10, 25, vi. 18; Tit. ii. 7, 14; 1 Pet. ii. 12).

[3] ἔργα ἀγαθά (Acts ix. 36; 2 Cor. ix. 8; Eph. ii. 10, Col. i. 10; 1 Tim. ii. 10, v. 10, 2 Tim. iii. 17; Heb. xiii. 21).

[4] Eph. ii. 10. [5] Apoc. ii. 2, 19, iii. 1, 8, 15.

nests in its branches. The leaven which His Church was to hide in the hearts of men would spread through the lump of human nature till the whole was leavened. Such was to be the history of the Kingdom of God, as the principle of the Kingdom worked itself out in the conversion of the world.[1] The disciples whom Jesus had made were in their turn to make others, and these again yet others, till all the nations had been baptized into the threefold Name, and taught to observe all that the Lord had enjoined upon His first followers. From Jerusalem the Twelve or their successors (for a succession is of course implied) were to carry their message to the uttermost part of the earth.[2] Of the ultimate success of this propaganda the Head of the Church entertained no doubt; "this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony unto all nations; and then shall the end come."[3]

This, then, is the work specially committed to the Catholic Church in all successive generations, right up to the time of the consummation. On the whole the Church has recognized her duty in this matter, and has sought to fulfil it. In the Apostolic Church of the first age every believer was a missionary, within the sphere of his own opportunities. There were Apostles and evangelists who gave up their whole time to the work; but non-official members of

[1] Matt. xiii. 31 f. [2] Acts i. 8. [3] Matt. xxiv. 14.

the brotherhood also, men and women, such as Aquila and Prisca, who travelled on their private business from Rome to Corinth and Ephesus, carried the Gospel from city to city, and were among St Paul's "fellow-workers in Christ." So were many others who, as far as we can judge, had no official position. Women, as well as men, "laboured," and "laboured much in the Lord."[1] The Church at Philippi once and again sent subsidies to the Apostle which enabled him to continue his work.[2] From the Thessalonian Church "sounded forth the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place" where their "faith to Godward" was reported.[3] The promise to the Church in Philadelphia, "Behold, I have set before thee an open door," is probably a call to continued evangelistic work in the neighbourhood of that city.[4] Everywhere among their heathen neighbours the first converts shone "as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life";[5] and it is not impossible that more souls were "added to the Lord" by the spectacle of the Christian life, as it was seen in the young churches, than by the direct labours of a St Paul.[6] A charming story is told by Justin Martyr concerning a stranger who, meeting Justin as he paced the colonnades at Ephesus, accosted him, and in the conversation that

[1] Rom. xvi. 3. [2] Phil. iv. 16. [3] 1 Thess. i. 8.
[4] Apoc. iii. 18. [5] Phil. ii. 15.
[6] See Harnack, *Expansion of Christianity* (Eng. tr.), i. pp. 458 ff., 479 ff.

followed drew him on from philosophy to the Gospel, breaking off at last with the words, "Pray above all that the gates of life may be opened to you; for these things are not to be seen or apprehended by any man unless God and His Christ give him understanding."[1] It was thus that the faithful in early times took their part in the missionary work of the Church, eagerly using every opportunity of recommending their faith to all they met. The names of these unofficial evangelists have perished, and were perhaps, as apparently in Justin's case, unknown even to those who were brought by them to Christ; but their work remains in the mighty edifice which rose on such slender beginnings.

The Church has never, except for short intervals of deadness or of preoccupation, lost sight of her commission to evangelize the world. The Middle Age was obsessed by questions of dogmatic theology, by ecclesiastical statecraft, and by the preponderance of the ascetic life; yet the call of the non-Christian lands made itself heard, and was answered by not a few devoted missionaries.[2] Our own island owes its Christianity in the North to Columba and Aidan, and in the South to Gregory and Augustine. From the sixth to the ninth century the Nestorians,

[1] Justin, *dial.* 8.

[2] The details may be read in Hardwick's *Church History* (Middle Age), *passim.*

separated as they were from the historical Church, were busy with the conversion of the far East. Irish and English missionaries, Columban and Willibrord, and the greater Winfrid, better known as Boniface, planted the Church in Friesland and on the Rhine. The thirteenth century can boast of zealous labours for the conversion of the Moors. In the sixteenth the Reformation filled Europe with theological battle-cries, which for the time drowned the claims of foreign missions.[1] But the missionary zeal of the reformed reasserted itself in the next century. Under the Long Parliament, in 1649, a corporation was formed for propagating the Gospel among the Indians of New England.[2] The existing Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts obtained its charter in 1701; the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East began its career in 1799; the Universities' Mission to Central Africa has been at work since 1857. Thus the reproach of neglecting the primary duty of the Church has been rolled away from the Church of England, although even now her labours in the mission field are not to be compared in volume with those of the Roman Catholic communion or of the Protestant denominations. At present the

[1] Hardwick, *Church History* (Reformation), p. 399. While England was preoccupied by the Reformation movement, Xavier was doing his wonderful work in India and Japan (1542-1552).

[2] See Bp Barry's *Hulsean Lecture for* 1894-5, p. 24, note.

Church works through societies, and not by corporate action. Yet it is the Church, and not any voluntary society consisting of members of the Church, which is primarily responsible for fulfilling the Lord's commission. An effort is now being made to recognize and in part to assume this responsibility on the part of the Church by means of a Central Board of Missions; but the goal will not be reached until the work of the societies is undertaken by the Church herself, or done in her name and by her authority.

The missionary work of the Church is still with us and must continue while the world lasts. A future generation may see polytheistic heathenism extinguished; changes are proceeding in Africa and the far East which point to this conclusion. But that day is remote, and when it has come it will find the Church still struggling with irreligion, vice, and intellectual unbelief. Moreover, polytheism is by no means the only form of error which has to be overcome. Mohammedanism and Buddhism, Confucianism and animism, will remain when heathenism is gone, and new developements of anti-Christian energy are sure to appear. The Church must therefore be prepared for a struggle which will last till the Lord comes again. But it is one in which she is assured of the support of her Head, to whom all authority has been given in heaven and on earth,

and who has said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."[1]

Next to the work of propagating the faith, there is laid on the Church the call to "do good toward all men, and especially toward those that are of the household of the faith."[2]

Our Lord on earth "went about doing good."[3] The Church must imitate her Lord's attitude towards human suffering and need.

Philanthropy is no longer a peculiarly Christian virtue, having its origin in the revelation which the Gospel made of "the philanthropy of God."[4] The world has caught the word, and to some extent has copied the practice. There is a non-Christian socialism which seeks to ameliorate the condition of the toiling masses without the aid of religion, out of pure love for humanity. We do not know as yet how far this new philanthropy will go, or how long it will retain what it has borrowed from Christianity. But that philanthropy, in any deeper sense, began with the Church is beyond doubt. When in the fourth century Julian sought to put new life into an expiring paganism, he urged the heathen to practice benevolence by way of competing with Christianity. It is true that the philanthropy of the early Church

[1] Matt. xxviii. 18, 20. [2] Gal. vi. 10.

[3] διῆλθεν εὐεργετῶν (Acts x. 38).

[4] ἡ φιλανθρωπία τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ (Tit. iii. 4).

was chiefly shewn towards members of its own body: it was love of the brethren—'philadelphy,'[1] if the word may be coined—rather than love of the race. The Lord Himself taught that members of the Church had a first claim on the love of their brother-Christians. To help their brethren when in need or distress was to minister to Himself: "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me. I was in prison, and ye came unto me. . . . Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me."[2] If all men are His brethren inasmuch as He is the Son of man, yet the members of His Church are such in a special sense, and have a prior claim. So the early Christians gave themselves more particularly to the care of the sick and needy among their fellow-Christians. The heathen soon began to take note of the fact. Lucian gives the true reason for this brotherly love:[3] "their first Lawgiver taught them that they were all brethren." Our Lord created the

[1] For *φιλαδελφία* see Rom. xii. 10; 1 Thess. iv. 9; Heb. xiii. 1; 1 Pet. i. 22. In classical Greek the word seems to be used only for the mutual love of the sons of the same father; see Hort's note on 1 Pet. *l.c.* and his reference to 2 Macc. xv. 14, where *φιλάδελφος* is used in reference to the Jewish brotherhood.

[2] Matt. xxv. 35-40.

[3] Lucian, *Peregrinus*, 13 *ὁ νομοθέτης ὁ πρῶτος ἔπεισεν αὐτοὺς ὡς ἀδελφοὶ πάντες εἶεν ἀλλήλων.*

Christian virtue of 'philadelphy' by His precept and by His example: "A new commandment I give unto you ... as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples."[1] Circumstances have changed, and it is now in most cases no longer possible in philanthropic work to distinguish between members of the Church and those that are without. The Church recognizes the brotherhood of man, and takes her full share in works of general philanthropy; yet "the enthusiasm of humanity"[2] rises in Christian hearts to its highest when they recognize in the suffering brother-man for whom help is asked a fellow-member in the Body of Christ.

Besides her missionary and philanthropic labours, the Church has no lack of intellectual work. Each age brings its own problems for the Christian intellect to solve. The Apologists of the second century sought for points of contact between Greek philosophy and the Christian faith, in the hope of recommending Christianity to the consideration of the philosophical Emperors. In the next century Origen found occupation for his acute and active mind in the critical study of Holy Scripture. Two centuries later Augustine painted the great picture of

[1] John xiii. 34 f.

[2] As the author of *Ecce Homo* has happily called it. Cf. Westcott, *The Incarnation in Common Life*, especially ch. vii.

the City of God, in which he represents the Christian State as working hand in hand with the Church, and thus serving the high ends of the kingdom of heaven. So each age, each century, has contributed something to the intellectual treasures of Christendom. No age has had greater opportunities in this respect than our own. In the criticism and interpretation of Holy Scripture, in the defence of the faith and the adjustment of Christian thought to the requirements of present knowledge, in the consideration of the new questions which are continually arising among us, the Church has a task which calls for the best efforts of her trained intellects. Nor is there any lack of a response to these demands. Indeed, what is needed at the present moment is not greater intellectual activity, but greater self-restraint and more patience in investigation; a wholesome respect for traditional views, and the sobriety of judgement which refuses to publish to the world hasty statements in regard to questions that cannot be settled without long examination, or even until the results have been tested by the experience of more than one generation. The life of the Church is long enough to allow for the postponement of discussions which are not ripe for a decision; the faith of the Church is not to be abandoned at the call of a single scholar however eminent, nor even of a single age. The impatience of modern thought demands an immediate solution

of the difficulties it believes itself to have discovered; the Catholic Church can afford to wait; perhaps the difficulties exist only in the brain of the present generation, perhaps the lapse of a few years may bring a solution. The modern man has made and will yet make useful contributions to the sum of Christian knowledge. But wisdom will not die with him, and it remains for posterity to review his judgements, and to hold fast that which is good.

Even more important than her intellectual tasks is the spiritual work of the Church. The Church is "a spiritual house," "an habitation of God in the Spirit," a Spirit-bearing body, in which not only the visible and material but the intellectual side of life must be subordinated to the life of the Spirit. Of spiritual life and work in connexion with the individual this is not the place to speak. But the Church has also spiritual work to do in her corporate capacity. It is her business, to use St Paul's words, to "make known the manifold wisdom of God to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."[1] Such words rise above our comprehension into a sphere of which as yet we know but little; but they seem to open a vista of other orders of being, to be brought through the Church to a fuller sense of the wisdom of God as

[1] Eph. iii. 10 f.

shewn in the Incarnation and Sacrifice of our Lord. It is easier to understand how the Church holds forth the word of life[1] to men in this present world by her example and her influence upon society and upon public opinion, by maintaining high standards of life, and yet higher ideals based upon the example of Christ, and the teaching of His Spirit. We have also to take into consideration all that the Church does for the building up of her own members. Never was this spiritual energy more manifest than at the present day; it is sufficient to name the multiplication of Eucharists, services, and sermons in our churches; the wide use of retreats, quiet days, conventions, conferences, Bible readings, study-circles—a plenitude of opportunities which is almost bewildering to those who remember the meagre provision offered to Church people half a century ago. So great is the supply that there is at present some danger of repletion, of spiritual hypertrophy; men may come to mistake restlessness for life, and the means for the end. But of the activity of the Church in our day there can be no question; and such activity is to be heartily welcomed as a sign of grace.

The spiritual work of the Church has for its object the glory of God in the manifestation before men and angels of the power of the Spirit of Christ. There can be no higher aim than this; and none that is

[1] Phil. ii. 16.

lower ought to satisfy the aspirations of the Christian body.

5. Two English books have appeared in recent years bearing the title *Ecclesia discens*[1]—the Church as learner. The Church has been, is, and must always be a learner; what Ignatius said of himself on the way to martyrdom might be said by the whole Christian Society throughout her long history: "now I begin to be a disciple."[2] For the Body of Christ is under the perpetual teaching of the Holy Spirit, and her past progress in the school of Christ is as nothing in comparison to that which lies before her. She learns by her experience, and even by her mistakes; she learns by the discoveries of physical science, and by literary and historical criticism, so far as criticism has advanced beyond the stage of crude dogmatism or arbitrary guesswork. Above all, she learns from the direct teaching of the Spirit, who is her constant Guide to the ultimate truth.

It is because the Church is ever learning that she is able to teach. The *Ecclesia discens* is also and for that very reason the *Ecclesia docens*. She holds and will always hold among men the teacher's office. The Church is not only the pillar and base of the

[1] See J. H. F. Peile, *Ecclesia discens*. The earlier book with the same title is by A. W. Hutton (*op. cit.* p. vi).

[2] Ignatius, *Eph.* 3 *νῦν ἀρχὴν ἔχω τοῦ μαθητεύεσθαι*: *Rom.* 5 *νῦν ἄρχομαι μαθητὴς εἶναι.*

truth, but its living witness before the world. Every Christian, so far as he is taught of the Spirit, knows enough of the truth for his own salvation; "ye have an anointing from the Holy One; ye all know . . . ye have no need for any to teach you."[1] St John does not say that all Christians are qualified to be teachers, but only that they are all taught by the Holy Spirit. Nor does he say that there is no room for a teaching office in the Church since all Christians know through the interior teaching of the Holy Spirit the essential truths of the Gospel. Our Lord, who gives to each believer His Spirit in Baptism and the laying on of hands, gives also to the Church "pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ."[2] Thus the Church has a teaching ministry of Divine appointment. Moreover, she teaches also by corporate action. The Church of the Apostolic age taught all later ages by establishing a tradition which is the Christian Rule of faith. The New Testament, which is the written repository of that tradition, is the Book of the Church, written by members of the Church, preserved by the Church, collected by the Church into a canon. The Church of the second century summed up the Apostolic teaching in the earliest baptismal creeds; the Church of the fourth century interpreted it for us in the great

[1] 1 John ii. 20, 27 (reading πάντες in *v.* 20). [2] Eph. iv. 11 f.

synodical creeds of Nicaea and Constantinople. Each succeeding age of the Church has added its contribution, not indeed to the original deposit itself, but to the right and full understanding of it.

St Paul's doctrine of the "deposit"[1] forbids the thought that wholly new truths may be revealed to later ages. The one faith is to be handed on unbroken and intact, as it was "once for all delivered"[2] to the first generation by the Spirit of Christ. Yet, as Vincent of Lerins long ago pointed out, the analogy of living organisms leads us to expect growth in the body of truth.[3] No addition can be made to the limbs or joints of the body, but the original frame can be developed in every part. A developement of Christian doctrine in the way of definition or explanation by the authority of the Church is to be looked for from time to time; but an addition to the Creed of new articles of the faith is unthinkable. The Church can teach only what she has been taught; she can deliver only that which she has received. But she can teach and deliver it with growing fulness of understanding and explicitness of statement.

How does the Church, as a body, exercise the teaching office?

As the 20th Article affirms, "the Church is a witness

[1] ἡ παραθήκη (1 Tim. vi. 20, 2 Tim. i. 14).
[2] Jude 3. [3] Vincent, *Commonit.* 2.

and keeper of Holy Writ." It was the Church that determined the canon of the New Testament, and to some extent that of the Old also. She received the Hebrew canon of the Old Testament in the Septuagint version from the Hellenistic Synagogue, but she authorized in addition to it the reading of certain other books which were not in the Hebrew Bible. In the case of the New Testament the decision lay wholly in her hands. That we now read the Epistle to the Hebrews and not the greatly inferior Epistle of Barnabas, the Gospel of St Matthew and not the Gospel according to the Hebrews, the Apocalypse of St John and not the Apocalypse ascribed to St Peter, is due to the judgement of the Christian Society, not pronounced in an oecumenical Council, but gradually reached through the verdict of Christian experience.[1]

And as the Church witnesses to the contents of the canon of Scripture, so also she teaches us its meaning. It is not meant by this that the judgement of the Church supersedes a critical examination of the documents, or the use of the best modern helps to the exegesis of the text; but that the general consent

[1] See Westcott, *On the Canon*, p. 12: "It is thus to the Church that we must look both for the formation and the proof of the Canon. The written Rule of Christendom must rest finally on the general confession of the Church, and not on the independent opinions of her members." *Ibid.* p. 501: "The Canon was never referred in the first ages to the authority of Fathers or Councils."

of Christendom as to the teaching of Scripture on vital points of doctrine is to be accepted by members of the Church as final, or is to be abandoned only after the fullest examination of all the facts. "The Church hath authority in controversies of faith"; *i.e.* an appeal lies from the judgement of individuals, however eminent, to the judgement of the body. The Church is in such matters the authorized teacher of all Christians, it being understood that by the Church in this connexion is meant not any officer or officers of the body, but the body itself, finding a voice in the continuous consent of Christendom.

Further, the Church teaches by her creeds and definitions of faith. It is from the creeds rather than from the Bible that the majority of Christians derive their knowledge of the essential *credenda* of their religion. The Creeds embody the substance of the Apostolic tradition, oral and written, and present it in a succinct form, which is committed to memory in childhood, is associated with the most solemn moments of life, and has the prestige of high antiquity. One of our creeds comes to us from the age of persecution; it is the creed of our Baptism, and is enshrined in the Church Catechism which prepares the young Christian for Confirmation. Another, the so-called Nicene, has been for centuries recited both in East and West at the service of Holy Communion. By these two time-honoured

documents the Church teaches her members all the essential truths of their faith.[1]

More remotely and indirectly the Church teaches through her Bishops, the official guardians of doctrine, and her parish priests, who are the ordinary instructors of the people committed to their charge. Less formally, but perhaps not less effectively, she teaches through parents and sponsors, school masters and mistresses, and the conductors of Sunday schools and Bible classes, who, if they are faithful to their trust, regard the religious instruction of their pupils as a solemn duty which they fulfil in the Church's stead. It is no small responsibility to represent in the humblest way the great Christian Society which is used by the Holy Spirit as, under Him, the instructor of all believers. The Spirit and the Bride bear joint witness to the truth,[2] and it is the part of every Christian teacher, whether priest or layman, to share, according to his opportunities, in this world-long work.

6. Authority[3] was claimed by the Head of the Church, while He was on earth, with great explicitness and in many spheres of action. He declared Himself

[1] See the writer's lecture on *The Ancient Creeds in Modern Life* (S.P.C.K.), p. 5 ff.

[2] Apoc. xxii. 17 (cf. John xiv. 26 f.).

[3] ἐξουσία. On *auctoritas* see the useful remarks in *Foundations*, p. 366.

to have authority to teach, to forgive sins, to execute judgement. His authority extended, He said, over all flesh for the purposes of His mission; nay, all authority had been given to Him in heaven and on earth.[1] A part of this authority was delegated by Him to the Church; His disciples were authorized to preach the Gospel, to work miracles of healing, to bind and to loose, to remit sins or to retain them, to baptize, and to teach all the baptized.[2]

Did this delegated authority expire with the first generation or with the Apostolic age? It is inconceivable that it did, if the Church possesses the permanent[3] gift of the Spirit which was promised to her by Christ, or if it is her mission to carry on the work begun by the Twelve. Such authority, at least, as may be necessary for the fulfilment of her appointed work is guaranteed to her by the Lord's assurance that He will be with her always, even to the consummation of the present order.[4] Authority to evangelize, baptize, and teach; authority to bind and loose, and to declare the absolution and remission of sins, is as necessary to the Church of our own time as it was to the Church of the first century; and being so, it is as surely operative now as it was

[1] Mark i. 22, 27, ii. 10; John v. 27, xvii. 2; Matt. xxviii. 18.

[2] Mark iii. 14 f.; John xx. 23; Matt. xvi. 19, xxviii. 19 f.

[3] *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα* (John xiv. 16).

[4] *ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος* (Matt. xxviii. 20).

then. The continued presence of Christ with the Church is, in fact, her standing authority to speak and act in His Name. The Spirit of Christ is with us, and His Spirit makes valid every word spoken, every Sacrament ministered, every work of faith and labour of love by which the Church represents Christ to men.

The whole work of the Christian ministry is based on this gift of authority.[1] To candidates for the diaconate the ordaining Bishop says, "Take thou authority to execute the office of a deacon in the Church of God"; to the candidate for the priesthood, "Take thou authority to preach the Word of God and to minister the Holy Sacraments." The Bishop himself has authority given him by the consecrating Bishops, who had themselves received it from others. After ordination the deacon or priest receives his special charge from the hands of the Bishop through licence or institution, as the case may be. Thus, in the Catholic Church, no baptism or confirmation is ministered, no Eucharist celebrated, no absolution given, no sermon preached, no pastoral work done, no Orders conferred, but by authority, which has come mediately through the Bishops, but ultimately from Christ, by His Spirit. So that, as Richard Hooker says, "whether we preach, pray,

[1] See Art. xxiii.: "Those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent which be chosen and called to this work by men who have publick authority given unto them ... to call and send."

baptize, communicate, condemn, give absolution, or whatsoever, as dispensers of God's mysteries, our words, judgements, acts, deeds, are not our own, but the Holy Ghost's."[1] The responsibility of doing or leaving undone belongs to the minister, but the power which attends his ministerial words and acts is not his own but Christ's, derived through the Body which bears His Spirit and exercises His authority.

Further, according to the 20th Article, "the Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies." Excepting the two great Sacraments, our Lord, so far as we know, prescribed no rite of general obligation. Two or three rites seem to have been instituted by the Apostles—the laying on of hands at ordinations, and on the baptized: perhaps also the anointing of the sick,[2] and the agapé. At a later time customs differed in different churches, and while there was general agreement in the order of worship, especially at the Eucharist, the details followed the use of the provincial or national Church, as the case might be.[3] Thus it was not altogether a new claim which was put forth by Archbishop Cranmer on behalf of the Church of England, that she was at liberty to frame her own 'use,' and to require her own people to conform to it. "Although (as the Archbishop writes in a note "Of Ceremonies" appended to the Prayer-

[1] Hooker, *E.P.* v. 77. 8. [2] James v. 14.

[3] See Duchesne, *Christian Worship* (Eng. tr. 1910), pp. 23 ff., 54 ff.

book of 1549)[1] the keeping or omitting of a ceremony (in itself considered) is but a small thing, yet the wilful and contemptuous transgression and breaking of a common order and discipline is no small offence before God. . . . Therefore no man ought to take in hand nor presume to appoint or alter any public or common order in Christ's Church, except he be lawfully called and authorized thereunto." When the Puritans asked why they should thus 'hang their judgement on the Church's sleeve,' Hooker answered, "Because two are better than one; shall God Himself allow so much authority and power unto every poor family for the ordering of all which are in it; and the city of the living God, which is His Church, be able neither to command nor yet to forbid anything which the meanest shall in that respect, and for her sole authority's sake, be bound to obey"?[2]

As in the sixteenth century the English Church, which represents the Catholic Church in this country, had authority to enact a new 'use' for her children, so now in this twentieth century she has authority to revise it. And if the work of revision is brought to a successful end, it will be the duty of all Churchmen to accept the revised Book, as their fathers accepted successively the Books of 1549, 1552, and 1661, whether the changes which shall be made com-

[1] Removed to its present place (after the Preface) in 1552.
[2] Hooker, *op. cit.* v. 8. 2 f.

mend themselves to their judgement or no. At the same time there is no reason to doubt that the extreme care which is being taken to prevent hasty and ill-considered action will in the end ensure the willing consent of "all sober, peaceable, and truly conscientious sons of the Church of England."[1]

Once more, "the Church hath authority in controversies of faith." Such controversies for their final settlement demand the authority of the whole Church, acting through an oecumenical Council. At the Reformation the Church in this country was called to deal with an accumulation of doctrines unknown to the ancient undivided Church, and no oecumenical Council was available to which an appeal could be made. In these circumstances the national Church herself undertook the reform of doctrine so far as her own teaching was concerned. But in doing so she was careful to follow the guidance of Holy Scripture, to abide by the doctrinal canons of the great Councils of undivided Christendom, and when she departed from the teaching of the Western Church, to do so provisionally, pending the judgement of a future oecumenical Council, if the time should ever come again when such a gathering of all the Bishops of Christendom could be held.[2]

[1] Preface of the 1662 Prayerbook.

[2] Cranmer, *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters* (Parker Society), pp. 225 ff., 455; cf. Mason, *Church of England and Episcopacy*, p. 2 f.

Meanwhile the Anglican Church claims the right which is claimed also by the Roman See, to erect doctrinal standards for her own children, and to reject any which appear to her to have no authority from Scripture or the consent of Catholic Christendom.

It may be asked how authoritative judgements of this kind, whether they proceed from a particular Church or from the whole Christian body, can be consistent with the right of private judgement.[1] Undoubtedly the individual is in the last resort the judge of his own intellectual attitude in matters of faith, subject only to the judgement of God. But it is for the Church and not for the individual to decide whether a doctrine is or is not to be held by her members; and her decision is binding upon them so long as they continue to be such. Individuals who, in the exercise of their personal responsibility, refuse to submit to the ruling of the Church, have their remedy: they can quit her communion, and join or form another society which supports their personal beliefs. Such a step, no doubt, is deplorable, and to be taken only in an extreme case; and for the layman who is bound merely by the creeds of Baptism and Communion it can rarely if ever be necessary. From the Church's point of view, it is lamentable that

[1] Cf. Stanton, *Place of Authority in Religious Belief*, p. 188 ff.; *Foundations*, p. 377 ff.

separation should ever occur. But it is better for her to suffer an occasional loss of this nature, than to renounce her duty of bearing witness to what she believes to be the truth.

III

THE CHURCH IN ITS RELATIONS

1. NEITHER the responsibilities nor the privileges of the individual have been overlooked in the economy of the Divine Kingdom. Such sayings of Christ as these: "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's shall save it"; "what doth it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?" "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out"—are clearly individualistic; and they do not stand by any means alone. Our Lord's whole teaching, and all His dealings with individuals, shew the great value which He attached to every human soul. The "joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth" reveals the enthusiasm for the salvation of the individual that stirs the higher order from which He came.[1] A like regard for individuals appears in the Epistles of the New Testament, although with few exceptions they are addressed to communities. "Who art

[1] Mark viii. 35 f.; John vi. 37; Luke xv. 7, 10.

thou that judgest the servant of another? to his own master he standeth or falleth"; "each one of us shall give account of himself to God." "Follow after . . . the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord." "Looking diligently lest there be any man that falleth short of the grace of God." "If any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally." "Each man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God"; "whosoever goeth on and abideth not in the teaching of Christ hath not God; he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son."[1] Everywhere in the Epistles we meet with the same insistence on personal religion, and the same prominence is given to individual effort and individual liberty of thought and action.

In what relation does New Testament individualism stand to the New Testament doctrine of the Church? Must we confess that we are confronted by two inconsistent systems, of which one represents religion as a purely personal matter, a matter between the soul and God, in which the Church cannot intervene; while the other regards the individual as a member of a great spiritual Society, who receives sanctification and salvation

[1] Rom. xiv. 4, 12; Heb. xii. 14; James i. 5, 14; 1 John v. 1; 2 John 9.

through the body and in no other way? Both these views have been maintained, and both appear to find some support in the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles. But it is, in fact, only an exaggerated individualism and an exaggerated collectivism that are incompatible: the individualism and the collectivism of the New Testament are not only consistent, but complementary to one another. Christianity has room for both, each in its own place.

According to the teaching of the New Testament the individual who 'enquires after God,'[1] and asks what he must do to be saved, must begin by seeking admission into the fellowship of the Christian Society.[2] A religious life apart from the communion of the Church was a phenomenon unknown to the Apostolic age, and for which no provision was made. New converts were added to the body by Baptism, and Baptism admits the baptized to a corporate life; they are "the body of Christ, and severally members thereof."[3] The chief act of Christian worship is a social sacred meal, in which all partake together of one bread and one cup. To be cut off from this act of fellowship was in the view of the early Church the greatest loss that a Christian could suffer, short of final separation from Christ. Early Christian

[1] An *ἐπερώτημα εἰς θεόν* precedes baptism in 1 Pet. iii. 21.

[2] Acts ii. 41, 47, v. 14, ix. 18, xvi. 15, 32.

[3] 1 Cor. xii. 27.

writers, indeed, frequently deny that salvation is to be had outside the Body of Christ.[1]

The individual, then, can no more live his life in Christ apart from the Church than a limb separated from the body can retain its vital power. Yet his individuality is not sacrificed by his being brought into fellowship with the other members of Christ's Body. No abandonment of personal independence is exacted from him, except so far as independence conflicts with his own interests or with those of the Body. Individual characteristics are strongly marked in the Apostolate, which contained Simon the Rock, and Simon the Zealot; the sons of Zebedee, characterized by our Lord as "sons of thunder," and Thomas, the despondent and doubting; Matthew, who passed into Christ's service from the seat of custom, and Judas Iscariot, who had charge of the common purse, and used the contents for his own purposes, yet in whose cold and calculating nature the Lord saw possibilities of good work, although they were not realized. There is a similar variety in the gifts of the Spirit: "to each one is given a manifestation of the Spirit for the profit [of the community]: to one . . . the word of wisdom, and to another the word of knowledge . . . to another faith . . . and to another gifts of healing; the

[1] Cf. *e.g.* Origen, *hom. in Jos.* iii. 5 "extra ecclesiam nullus salvatur"; Cyprian, *de unit.* 6 "habere non potest Deum patrem, qui ecclesiam non habet matrem . . . hanc unitatem qui non tenet . . . vitam non tenet et salutem."

same Spirit dividing to each one severally as he will."[1] One man is the ear of the Body, another the eye; some are its hands, others its feet. Were all endowed with the same natural character or the same intellectual or spiritual gifts, the body would be ill equipped for the work of life; it is by allowing full liberty for the developement of manifold gifts that the service of the Christian Society is fulfilled.

Nor does the fellowship of the Church override personal responsibility. Each member of the Church is baptized separately, on a personal profession of repentance and faith; however large the number of candidates presented together at the font, to each of them the words "I baptize thee" (or, in the East, "The servant of God is baptized")[2] are said individually, and each is individually immersed or affused in the water. Even in the social sacrament of the Eucharist the Church orders a separate administration to each communicant. Further, and above all, each member of the Church must by the act of his own will turn to God in a life of conversion, without which the communion of the Sacraments avails nothing, or rather is a ground of greater condemnation if the individual makes no response to the love of God. In the end the Master will render to each man

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 7 ff.

[2] The form of baptism used in the Orthodox Church (*βαπτίζεται ὁ δοῦλος τοῦ θεοῦ εἰς τὸ ὄνομα* κτλ.).

according as his work is found to be;[1] the final reckoning is not with the Church as a whole, but with the individual servant in regard to his personal opportunities and capacities, and his use or misuse of both.

Meanwhile the individual has a duty to perform towards the Church, and the Church towards the individual. The Church rightly claims from each of her members loyal co-operation, readiness to answer her appeals for service, spiritual patriotism, the submission of private interests to the welfare of the body. Independent action in matters that properly belong to the corporate life, such as any unnecessary refusal to follow the authorized leaders and representatives of the body, any neglect or depreciation of the common order of the Church even in matters which affect only the smaller details of ritual or discipline, constitutes a breach of the duty which is imposed on the individual by the fact of his being a member of the Christian Society. If a baptized Christian refuses to "hear the Church,"[2] *i.e.* if he will not listen to the congregation of Christ's flock speaking through its accredited organs, we know who has said, "Let him be unto thee as the heathen and the publican." The man puts himself outside the Ecclesia by declining

[1] Apoc. xxii. 12.

[2] ἐὰν δὲ καὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας παρακούσῃ (Matt. xviii. 17). The ἐκκλησία is here doubtless the local congregation, but viewed as representing the whole Body of Christ.

to listen to her judgement; by setting up his private judgement against the judgement of the Society in a matter of which the Society is rightly judge.

On the other hand, the Church has a duty towards each of her members. It is her business to see that he is supplied with the ministry of the word and sacraments and all the other benefits of the pastoral care. This responsibility rests primarily with the Church herself, which, as the mother of Christians, is bound to make provision for the spiritual needs of her children. In practice the work devolves on her officers, the Bishop of the diocese, and the parish priest to whom the care of souls is committed by the Bishop. To these the Lord has given, in the person of St Peter, the solemn charge, "Feed my lambs . . . tend, feed my sheep."[1] No mere perfunctory performance of statutory services in the parish church can be regarded as a fulfilment of that charge, which obviously demands a personal oversight of individuals. Ministering to individual souls is the most difficult and perhaps the most important of the duties of the clergy. They are called to "feed and provide for the Lord's family; to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for His children that are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved

[1] *βόσκε τὰ ἀρνία μου . . . ποίμαινε . . . βόσκε τὰ προβάτιά μου* (John xxi. 15 ff.).

through Christ for ever." Heavy, indeed, is the responsibility of the priest if any member of the Church and Congregation which he is called to serve shall take any hurt or hindrance by reason of his negligence. For the brother who is neglected by the under-shepherd is one of those for whom the Chief Shepherd died,[1] and the Chief Shepherd will require an account to be rendered to Him of every soul for which He shed His Blood.

The individual soul is dear to the heart of Christ; it was for the sake of individuals that He instituted and endowed His Church. The Church must reflect and carry out the mind of Christ.

2. What is the relation of the Church to the Churches? The New Testament speaks, as we have seen, of churches as well as of the Church. We read of the churches of the provinces of Asia, Galatia, and Macedonia;[2] of a church at Corinth, at Cenchreae, at Thessalonica, at Ephesus,[3] as well as of the whole Christian Society regarded as a unit.[4] The distinction between the Church and the churches is latent in our Lord's own references to the Ecclesia; in

[1] Cf. 1 Cor. viii. 11 ὁ ἀδελφὸς δι' ὃν Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν.

[2] 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 19; Gal. i. 2; 2 Cor. viii. 1.

[3] 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Cor. i. 1; Rom. xvi. 1; 1 Thess. i. 1, 2 Thess. i. 1; Apoc. ii. 1.

[4] Eph. i. 22, iv. 4.

the latter part of Acts and in the Epistles[1] it is recognized everywhere.

At first sight we may be disposed to regard the local churches as parts of the Universal Church; limbs of the Body, branches of the Vine. But this view does not find support from a nearer examination of the facts. The conception of the One Church is primary, that of the churches secondary. The One Church is not an agglomeration of churches, but the churches are local representatives of the Church. In the words of Dr. Hort, "the members which make up the One Ecclesia are not communities, but individual men. The One Ecclesia includes all members of all partial Ecclesiae, but its relations to them all [*i.e.* to all the members of the ecclesiae] are direct, not mediate."[2] Each local church is the Body of Christ in its own locality, not a part of the whole Body; the Body as a whole consists, not of the sum of the local communities, but of the sum of all their members.

If this account of the relation of the Ecclesia to the ecclesiae is correct, as it seems to be, the New Testament does not sanction the idea that the Catholic Church is made up of branches, such as the Orthodox branch, the Roman branch, the Anglican branch. It would be truer to say that

[1] Rom. xvi. 4, 16; 1 Cor. vii. 17, xiv. 33; 2 Cor. viii. 18 f., xi. 28.
[2] Hort, *Ecclesia*, p. 168 f.

in England the Catholic Church is represented by the Anglican communion, in France by the Roman communion, in Russia by the Orthodox. Each of the churches has Christ for its Head and the Spirit for its animating principle, and the members of each are also members of the great Christian brotherhood. The Catholic Church is visible in the local church, which is in fact the Catholic Church of its own locality.[1]

Hence in the primitive Church all the churches were in communion one with the other. A Christian who passed from one province or city to another, whether as the delegate of a local church or on private business, was sure of being admitted to all the privileges of the brotherhood if he could produce credentials of Church membership in his own locality. Thus, when Apollos passed from Ephesus to Corinth he carried with him letters from the Ephesian church which gained him admission into the Corinthian society. Avircius of Hierapolis found himself welcomed to the communion of churches as far apart as Rome and Nisibis.[2] Polycarp of Smyrna was not only welcomed at Rome, but by invitation of the Roman Bishop he consecrated the Eucharist in the presence of the latter.[3]

[1] Lightfoot compares Athanasius, *Festal Letters*, ii. 94: "The Catholic Church, which is in every place."

[2] See the text of this epitaph in Ramsay's *Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia*, ii. p. 722 f.

[3] Irenaeus ap. Eus. *H.E.* v. 24.

The circumstances of our own age differ so widely from those of the first two centuries that it is by no means easy to apply to them principles laid down in the Apostolic and early Christian writings. In England at the present time two ancient churches claim to represent the Catholic Church, and besides these there is a multiplicity of denominations founded subsequently to the Reformation which are without the succession. The Roman church in England, although it has the succession, occupies a schismatical position; its episcopate is not descended from the ancient episcopate of this country, but has been imported from abroad; it has set up throne against throne, and altar against altar. The Protestant denominations in most cases originated in the private venture of some member of the national church who left her communion or refused her discipline. Thus Independency began with Robert Brown, the Society of Friends with William Penn, Methodism with John Wesley.

These non-catholic bodies, it is to be noted, are in the main orthodox, confessing the Holy Trinity as the Church confesses It, believing in the Incarnation and the two natures of our Lord, preaching the Atonement, the Resurrection, and the Ascension, and laying emphasis upon the work of the Holy Spirit. Excepting the Friends, they acknowledge the two great Sacraments of the Gospel, and their

members are duly baptized and are members, in virtue of their baptism, of the Holy Catholic Church. Their societies are societies of Christian people, their ministers are the recognized officers of Christian societies. It is a welcome sign of some desire to return to primitive models when non-conformist bodies call themselves churches and Catholics, as they are now disposed to do.

Meanwhile, the Church stands open for the return of her separated children. When the time comes it may be that a place will be found for the voluntary societies within the ancient fold; in certain circumstances it may be possible to give them the Episcopate, and so to regularize their position. But, in the words of the Lambeth Conference, while "every opportunity should be taken to emphasize the Divine purpose of visible unity among Christians as a part of revelation," "in all partial projects of reunion and intercommunion the final attainment of the Divine purpose should be kept in view"; and consequently "care should be taken to do what will advance the reunion of the whole of Christendom, and to abstain from doing anything that will retard or prevent it."[1]

This grave warning, uttered by the Bishops of the whole Anglican communion, reminds us that what is known as 'Home Reunion' is a part of a

[1] Lambeth Conference of 1908, Resolution 58 (p. 60).

much larger problem. As a historical church we have responsibilities which extend far beyond our own shores, and relations with every other Catholic church under heaven. The churches of Russia and Greece, the separated churches of the East, the great Latin communion, the Scandinavian churches, so far as they may claim to be descendants of the ancient churches of those lands—we are debtors to them all; we owe it to them not to sacrifice a position which may in the future enable us to mediate between the severed units of Catholic Christendom. It is not less our duty to preserve for our non-episcopal brethren the episcopal succession which at some future time they may learn to value and desire.[1] In ways such as these it may be given to us to assist in opening the way to the restoration of the long-lost intercommunion of all Christian people.

3. "Ye are the salt of the earth . . . ye are the light of the world."[2] So the Master taught His first disciples, and His words apply to the Church which has risen on the foundation of the Apostles. The Church has a relation to the world, and responsibilities to discharge in connexion with it; she is called to season human society with the salt of grace, to illuminate it

[1] See Archdeacon Greig's *The Church and Nonconformity*, pp. 129 ff., 146 ff.

[2] Matt. v. 13 f.

with the light of truth. To the Church is committed the Gospel of the Divine love for man, to be proclaimed by her to all nations for the obedience of faith.

From one point of view, indeed, the world is a hostile power: a scoffer to be silenced, an enemy to be overthrown. The world is at war with God, and the Church cannot be the friend of God's foe. "The friendship of the world is enmity towards God; whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God." So writes the plain-spoken St James, and St John practically agrees: "Love not the world . . . if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him; for all that is in the world . . . is not of the Father but is of the world."[1] Early post-apostolic writers take the same view. In the *Shepherd* of Hermas the Angel of Repentance says to the Roman Christians of the second century: "Ye who are servants of God dwell in a foreign land, for your city is far from this city.... As a dweller in a strange land, prepare nothing more for thyself than a competency."[2] So also the anonymous letter to Diognetus: "What the soul is to the body, such are Christians in the world. The soul is diffused through all the members of the body, and Christians are diffused throughout the divers cities of the world. The soul has its abode in

[1] James iv. 4; 1 John ii. 15 f. [2] Hermas, *sim.* 1. 1, 6.

the body, and yet it is not of the body ; so Christians have their abode in the world, and yet they are not of the world. The flesh hates the soul, and wages war against it . . . so the world hates Christians, . . . because they set themselves against it." [1] One of the earliest forms of Christian devotion prays : " Remember, Lord, Thy Church, to deliver it from all evil . . . may grace come, and the world pass away." [2]

This mutual hostility found expression in the persecutions of the first three centuries.[3] The history of the Church before 313 was largely that of a series of conflicts between the Roman Empire and the spiritual forces of Christianity. The Church conquered ; Constantine's acceptance of the faith was in fact a confession that the world-power had been defeated by the Cross. But the world remained when the Empire succumbed, and took its revenge by partly secularising the Church. " As we read the story (it has been said) we are forced to ask whether it is not true for the Church as well as for the individual disciple that friendship with the world is enmity with God, and that it is indeed possible for her to gain the whole world and yet lose her own soul."[4] The words need to be guarded, for the Church

[1] *ad Diogn.* 6. [2] *Didache*, 10.

[3] See Bp Westcott's Essay, *The Church and the World* (appended to his commentary on 1-3 John), and his posthumous work, *The Two Empires.*

[4] Hobhouse, *The Church and the World*, p. 125.

as a whole can never, even in the darkest days, lose the indwelling Spirit of God; but they point to a real peril which besets particular churches, imperial or national, when they ally themselves with the State under conditions that tend to silence their witness to the truth. The world may be more dangerous under the guise of friendship than as an open enemy; persecution may be less injurious than outward prosperity.

Is it then the wisdom of the Church to refuse alliances of any sort with the Christian State? to persist in isolation or antagonism when the State is willing to befriend and protect? Can she maintain amicable relations with the world-power, and yet preserve her liberty to do her proper work?

An answer to this question is attempted by St Augustine in his great treatise on the City of God.[1] Augustine sees in the Church and the world two cities or states, the one of God and from heaven, the other earthly and secular, even devilish. Yet distinct and opposite as the two are in origin, aim, and workings, each has need of the other; the earthly needs the moral influence of the heavenly, and the Church, on her side, can hold her property and status only by consent of the secular power. But the debt of the State to the Church far exceeds that of the Church to the State, and the Christian State recognizes this

[1] Cf. Bp Robertson, *Regnum Dei*, p. 206 ff.

and is the willing vassal of the City of God. Augustine, in fact, imagines an ideal compact between the two, according to which the Church would be the predominant partner, and the State ultimately be identified with the Church, the world itself becoming in the end, in the words of the Apocalypse, "the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ." [1]

Every reader of history is aware of the failure of the attempt made by the Papacy in the eleventh and following centuries to realize this splendid idealism. It failed, because it lost sight of the spiritual nature and mission of the Church, on which Augustine, for all his dreams of a dominant City of God, retained a firm grasp.[2] The same inability to understand the spiritual character of the Body of Christ vitiated the opposite policy of Henry VIII. of England, who, while discarding the Papal pretensions, declared himself to be supreme head of the English Church. This title in his hands was no empty phrase: the Henrician Act of Supremacy gave the king power to "visit, repress, redress, reform, order, correct, restrain, and amend all such errors, heresies, abuses, offences, contempts, and enormities . . . which by any manner spiritual authority or jurisdiction ought or may lawfully be reformed." [3] Both the title and the authority were dropped in Mary's reign, and though a fresh

[1] Apoc. xi. 15. [2] Cf. Robertson, *op. cit.* p. 254 ff.
[3] Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, p. 244.

Act in 1559 called Elizabeth "Supreme Governor ... in all spiritual or ecclesiastical things," the Queen herself claimed no more than under God to have "the sovereignty and rule of all manner persons born within these her realms, of what estate either ecclesiastical or temporal soever they be"[1] —a very different thing from the supremacy which Henry had sought to establish. Interpreted in this way, the Royal Supremacy is no more than an assertion of the undoubted right of the Crown to govern all its subjects without appeal to an alien authority such as the Roman See. As the 37th Article explains, the Supremacy involves no interference with the spiritual work of the Church, merely rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and guarding the independence of the English Church against Papal encroachments.[2]

Nevertheless, it must be confessed that the connexion of the Church of England with the State since the Reformation has not been altogether favourable to the former. Under the Stuarts the Church became involved in the unpopularity of the Crown, and when the monarchy fell, she fell with it. With the Monarchy she rose again at the Restoration; but the taint of Erastianism clung to her, and notwith-

[1] Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, pp. 439, 449.

[2] On the history of the Royal Supremacy, see Makower, *Constitutional History of the Church of England* (Eng. tr.), p. 251 ff.

standing some recovery of independence under James II., and an outburst of activity in the days of Queen Anne, spiritual lethargy was sadly prevalent in the Established Church until the Evangelical and Tractarian movements brought a revival of earnest religion from opposite standpoints of theological opinion. To-day Erastians are a negligible minority in England, and the Crown uses its supremacy with great moderation and with an obvious desire for the spiritual welfare of the Church. On the other hand, the Church suffers from the heavy hand of a House of Commons[1] which is no longer an assembly of Churchmen, and contains, and probably in future will always contain, bitter enemies of the principle of Establishment. It is not for the Church to promote their ends; the alliance of Church and State is an ideal which for the sake of the State is to be preserved even at a considerable sacrifice. But it is conceivable that the time may come when the price demanded for its continuance will be too high, or when the State will renounce its official connexion with the Church. Such a breach between Church and State would be deplorable; but if it happens, the Church, though at first she staggers under the blow, may after a while grow in spiritual efficiency, as Liberationists predict. But whether she gains or loses, she will continue to be the

[1] Hobhouse, *op. cit.* pp. 291 ff., 326 ff.

representative in this country of historical Christianity. Disestablishment and Disendowment will not touch her claim to the allegiance of all English Christians who wish to belong to the Society which was founded by Jesus Christ.

Apart from the question of the Church's relation to the State, there is the wider problem of her attitude towards the society, the life, and the principles of the world.

The visible Church is "militant here on earth." This phrase, which was added in 1552 to the bidding of prayer "for the whole state of Christ's Church," is not peculiar to the second Book of Common Prayer. It occurs in pre-Reformation documents from the fourteenth century onwards,[1] and it is used in the Roman Catechism, which says: "The Church militant is the society of all the faithful still living on earth, and is called 'militant' because she wages perpetual warfare with those implacable enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil."[2] In such a connexion the world stands clearly for the spirit of the world, *i.e.* for worldliness. Against this the Church sets up the 'other-worldliness' of Christ and His Body; the drawings of a higher order which, answered by the faith and hope of Christians, counteract the attractions of the vain pomp and glory of the world.

[1] Scudamore, *Notitia Eucharistica*, p. 406 f.

[2] *Catechismus Romanus*, I. x. 5. Cf. Ambrose, *de mysteriis*, 2.

It is not then against the outward order of the world, or the business of life that the Church makes war, but against the undue influence of external things upon the human spirit, which was made for God and for the unseen and eternal. The outward order is of God, not less than the spiritual and invisible; for "every creature of God is good, and nothing to be rejected, if it be received with thanksgiving."[1] The Church has never consented to a Gnostic or Manichean view of the material universe, nor has she ever prescribed the ascetic or coenobitic life for her members in general. It was the prayer of our Lord for His disciples, not that they should be taken out of the world, but that they should be kept from the evil.[2] The relation of the Church to the world is therefore not one of indiscriminate antagonism. The Christian attitude towards life is not that of sour Pharisaism and a narrow bigotry, but of sympathy with the ills of men and patient labour for their highest good. To evil in every form the Church is an avowed and determined enemy, and she will never rest till it is crushed and destroyed. The world is full of evil, and the evil of the world cannot be overcome without apparent hostility to the world itself. But the Christian Society, like Christ Himself, was not sent to condemn the world but to save it, bringing it back to God through the Gospel of His love.

[1] 1 Tim. iv. 4. [2] John xvii. 15.

4. The Church militant here on earth will find her consummation in the Church triumphant in heaven. The Body of the victorious Christ must eventually share His triumph. "In the world ye have tribulation"—such was our Lord's last word to the Eleven on the night before the Passion—"but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."[1] "This is the victory that hath overcome the world"—so St John comments—"even our faith."[2] Since the faith of the Church as a whole is indefectible, her victory is sure. Meanwhile in what relation does the Church militant stand to the victorious Church of the great future?

The relation is that of the imperfect to the perfect; of immaturity to ripeness of age in Christ. The Church militant and the Church triumphant are not two Churches, but one and the same body in different stages of growth. The militant finds its completion in the triumphant; the triumphant is the realization of the ideal which is set before the militant. All the notes of the existing Church will have their place in her eternal state; all her functions will find their counterpart in her eternal work. But both notes and functions will be under new and final conditions. The Church triumphant, so far as we can conceive it, is the Church *sub specie aeternitatis*.

There is a third stage in the evolution of the

[1] John xvi. 33. [2] 1 John v. 4.

Church which stands between the militant and the triumphant. It is known as the Church 'expectant,' and consists of all members of the Church militant who have died in faith and have not as yet been admitted to the beatific Vision. The warfare of such souls is at an end, yet their triumph has not come; they have conquered, yet they are not crowned, for the crowning of the victors is reserved for Christ's return; "the Lord the Righteous Judge" shall give the crown of righteousness at that day, "not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing."[1] Since St Paul expressly includes himself among those who are then to receive the crown, it would appear that none of the Saints, not even the chiefest Apostles, have as yet passed out of the Church expectant into the Church triumphant.

The relation of the Church militant to the Church expectant will be considered when we presently come to the second part of this book, which will deal with the Communion of Saints. There is no subject connected with the doctrine of the Church upon which so little light is thrown in the New Testament, and scarce any which has given rise to so much speculation. Here it may suffice to say that our relation to the dead in Christ is not less real than our relation to the living. As physical death cannot

[1] 2 Tim. iv. 8.

separate any of us from the love of God in Christ, so neither can it break off the fellowship in the Spirit which makes all true members of the Church one. Only our external and visible relations are for the time at an end or, it may be truer to say, suspended: the spiritual unity remains. In this confidence we know that all the successive generations of the faithful who have passed within the veil are bound to us by the ties of a common faith and hope and love. In the Church on earth we "are come ... to the spirits of just men made perfect"; like a vast cloud they encompass us about, and bear witness to the truth of the Divine promises, and encourage us to run with patience the race that is set before us.[1] It may be that invisibly they share our worship and assist us by their intercessions; while we, for our part, may help them by remembering them in our prayers and thanksgivings.

The Church militant is perpetually contributing fresh members to the Church expectant; and when the end comes the Church militant and the Church expectant will together pass into the Church triumphant. Of all institutions on earth the Church alone seeks perfection with the certainty of ultimately attaining it; with her alone perfection is not an unrealizable ideal. The imperfections, limitations, and shortcomings of the Catholic Church are temporary;

[1] Heb. xii. 22, xii. 1.

her triumph is eternal. The Divine Society will not only outlive the world, but will not gain her maturity till the world has passed away. The end of the present order will be the beginning of the Church's fuller life.

II

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

προσελήλύθατε ... ἐκκλησίᾳ πρωτοτόκων ...
καὶ πνεύμασι δικαίων τετελειωμένων.

I

MEANING AND HISTORY OF THE PHRASE

1. 'COMMUNION of Saints' is not a Biblical phrase. But both 'communion' and 'saint' are Biblical terms, and it will be convenient to begin by examining their use in the Old and New Testaments.

The Greek word for 'communion'—*κοινωνία*—occurs but four times in the Greek Old Testament and but once in its canonical books.[1] In the New Testament, on the other hand, it is a fairly common word, occurring nineteen times.[2] It connotes fellowship, participation, contribution—a variety of meanings which the Latin Vulgate represents by *communio* or *communicatio*, *societas*, *participatio*, *collatio*. A few instances will suffice to illustrate these uses of the word. The converts on the day of Pentecost are

[1] Lev. vi. 2 (LXX) *περὶ κοινωνίας* (R.V. "of bargain"). The non-canonical passages are Wisdom viii. 18; 2 Macc. iv. 6.

[2] Acts ii. 42; Rom. xv. 26; 1 Cor. i. 9, x. 16 (*bis*); 2 Cor. vi. 14, viii. 4, ix. 13, xiii. 13; Gal. ii. 9; Phil. i. 5, ii. 1, iii. 10; Philem. 6; Heb. xiii. 16; 1 John i. 3 (*bis*), 6, 7.

said to have "continued stedfastly in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship."[1] "Ye were called," St Paul writes to the Corinthians, "unto the fellowship . . . of Jesus Christ our Lord." The heads of the Jerusalem Church gave to Paul and Barnabas "the right hands of fellowship." In a classical passage St John writes: "Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ;" "if we walk in the light we have fellowship one with another." In all these passages personal relations and intercourse are clearly included, whether with God and Christ, or with fellow-Christians. Other passages give the sense of joint-participation, as when St Paul speaks of the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ,[2] and of fellowship in service and in suffering.[3] Elsewhere the word signifies a collection to supply the needs of fellow-Christians: "it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia to make a certain contribution[4] for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem;" "they glorify God for the liberality of your contribution unto them;" "to do good and to communicate forget not,[5] for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

[1] Acts ii. 42 τῃ διδαχῇ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ τῃ κοινωνίᾳ, "and in the fellowship," whether of the Apostles or of the Christian body. See, however, Hort, *Ecclesia*, p. 44.

[2] 1 Cor. x. 16 κοινωνία τοῦ αἵματος, τοῦ σώματος (Vulg. *communicatio sanguinis, participatio corporis*).

[3] 2 Cor. viii. 4; Phil. iii. 10.

[4] Rom. xv. 26 (Vulg. *conlationem aliquam facere.*)

[5] Heb. xiii. 16 τῆς δὲ εὐποιίας καὶ κοινωνίας μὴ ἐπιλανθάνεσθε.

Of these three senses only the first is possible in the phrase "communion of saints," if by 'saints' we understand "holy persons." It is permissible to take *sanctorum* as neuter, and to translate "holy things." But the greatly predominant use of the masculine leaves little doubt that, so far as the usage of the New Testament can guide us, the common rendering is correct, and the communion of saints means the fellowship which holy persons have with one another in the Church of Jesus Christ.

But who are the holy persons intended? In the Old Testament the corresponding word is occasionally used for angelic beings, and such is the meaning in the passage quoted from the book of Enoch in the Epistle of Jude,[1] and possibly also in 1 Thess. iii. 13.[2] But in the great majority of instances the Acts and Epistles use the word 'saint' in a technical sense. It is one of the names current in the first age for all members of the Church. There were many such names; they were known also as the 'disciples,' the 'brethren,' the 'believers,' the men of 'the Way,'[3] and in some pagan circles as 'the Christians.'[4] In Acts 'the saints' has already taken its place among those earlier titles. "I have heard (Ananias says of Saul) how much evil he did to thy

[1] Jude 14. [2] See Dr. Milligan's note *ad loc.*

[3] Cf. Acts ix. 2 *ἐάν τινας εὕρῃ τῆς ὁδοῦ ὄντας.*

[4] Acts xi. 26, xxvi. 28; 1 Pet. iv. 26.

saints at Jerusalem." Peter, in his visitation of the churches, "came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda." "Many of the saints (St Paul confesses before Agrippa) did I shut up in prison."[1] In the Epistles of St Paul 'saints' is the prevalent name for the baptized. Apostolic letters are addressed to the 'saints,' *i.e.* the members of the Christian church in this or that particular city or province; the local churches are described as "congregations of saints"; good offices rendered to fellow-Christians are services offered to "the saints"; Church widows are eligible for their office if, amongst other deeds of charity, they have "washed the saints' feet"; every individual in a Christian community is a "saint in Christ Jesus."[2] The title is obviously used, not to distinguish between Christians and Christians, but to distinguish Christians of whatever type from non-Christians, the baptized from the unbaptized. Yet the word retains even in this sense an ethical connotation which sometimes comes to the surface, and is always present to the mind of the Apostolic writers. Thus, Christians are exhorted to act "in a manner worthy of the saints," or "as becometh saints"; and the coupling of ἅγιοι ('holy persons') with ἄμωμοι ('without blemish'), and the assumption that all

[1] Acts ix. 13, 32, 41, xxvi. 10.

[2] 2 Cor. i. 1; Eph. i. 1; 1 Cor. xiv. 33; Rom. xv. 25 (cf. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 15; 2 Cor. viii. 4, ix. 1, 12); 1 Tim. v. 10; Phil. iv. 21.

saints are "strong to apprehend" the dimensions and "to know the love of Christ," point in the same direction.[1] There is always, in the background of the name, the thought of a high and heavenly calling, of the ideal which is set before the members of Christ, together with a reminder that only those who make this ideal the aim of their lives can ultimately hold the great place which such a title promises.[2]

This deeper content of the word must be kept well in view when we think of the communion of Saints. Christian fellowship is the privilege of all members of the Church, but it is realized only so far as the sacramental consecration of Baptism is followed by an actual consecration of life. A merely nominal membership in the Body of Christ fails to create the sense of communion; the bond which draws fellow-Christians together is scarcely stronger than that which unites fellow-Moslems or fellow-Buddhists, unless there goes with it the unfeigned faith which makes the Christian creed the deepest reality in the world.

The view which would limit sainthood to members of the Church who have left the world, or even to the few among them who have received the honour of canonization, receives no countenance from the New Testament. Those who have died in faith

[1] Rom. xvi. 2; Eph. v. 3; Col. i. 22; Eph. iii. 18 f.
[2] See *e.g.* Apoc. viii. 4, xiv. 12, xix. 8.

form the great majority of the members of Christ, and they naturally rise to our minds when we think of the communion of saints, and take the largest place in the conception. But the members of the Church who are still on earth are included, for all are consecrated persons, and it is their privilege to share in the fellowship of the Body of Christ.

2. The phrase 'communion of saints' is as conspicuously absent in Christian writings of the early post-apostolic age as it is in the New Testament. Indeed the word *κοινωνία* seems to have no place in the sub-apostolic fathers or in the apologists of the second century. It occurs in Irenaeus,[1] but not with reference to Christian fellowship. The Latin fathers of North Africa are the first to use the Latin equivalent *communio* or *communicatio*, and also to approach to the conception of a *communio sanctorum*. Tertullian in his *Apology* tells the brethren that a member of the Church who commits a gross sin is suspended "from the fellowship of prayer and the assembly, and from all sacred intercourse." Heretics, he says elsewhere, are outside the Church, as is attested by their loss of 'communion.'[2] The African author of the *Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas* says that his purpose in

[1] Irenaeus, *haer.* i. 14. 2, iv. 31. 4, v. 27. 2.

[2] Tertullian, *apol.* 39; cf. *de praescr.* 43, *de bapt.* 15, *de pudic.* 15.

writing these Acts is to enable the readers of the story to have communion with the holy martyrs, and through them with Jesus Christ.[1] In the Epistles of Cyprian *communio* is frequently used for participation in the Eucharist; the right to claim sacramental communion is *ius communicationis*.[2] Cyprian does not seem to have hit upon the phrase *sanctorum communio*, but he has the opposite *communio malorum*, meaning by it, as the context appears to shew, communion with schismatics and heretics.[3] Other Church writers before Augustine speak of the 'communion of the Church,' or 'of the Catholic Church,' or 'of the unity of the Church';[4] while in Augustine and Latin writers later than Augustine we read of the 'communion of the Sacraments,' 'of the faith' or 'the faithful,' 'of the Apostolic see.'[5] Augustine also speaks, but very rarely, of the 'communion of saints.'[6] He does not seem to have borrowed the phrase from the creed, for it finds no place in the African creed as he cites it; more probably it was suggested to

[1] *Passio Perpet.* 1 (*Texts and Studies*, i. 2. p. 62 f.): "ut . . . communionem habeatis cum sanctis martyribus, et per illos cum Domino Jesu Christo."

[2] See *Studia Biblica*, iv. p. 268 f. [3] Cyprian, *ep.* 69. 9.

[4] Vincent. Lir. iii. 4; Hilar. Pict. *in Matt.* xvi. 34; Firmilian ap. Cypr. *ep.* 75. 24.

[5] Aug. *de civit.* i. 35; Leo M. *serm.* 42. 5; Vincent. Lir. iii. 4; Opt. v. 10; Greg. M. *ep.* 4. 39.

[6] Aug. *serm.* 214. 11; cf. *serm.* 52. 6, where he speaks of the "participatio societasque sanctorum."

him by the analogy of Cyprian's *communio malorum*, or as complementary to his own conception of a *communio sacramentorum*. "The Church of the living God (he writes) endures the evil in the communion of the sacraments, although they must be separated from her in the end, and she is meanwhile parted from them by the difference in standards of conduct." But the communion of saints tolerates no such admixture; it is the fellowship of the truly holy who are identical with the "number of the elect," and form the core and nucleus of the visible Church.

Thus the phrase 'communion of saints' is scarcely to be found before Augustine, and Augustine uses it but once or twice. But the idea which is expressed by it was one of the most primitive and universal of Christian conceptions. From the first the Church was inspired with the consciousness of possessing a common faith and life, common interests, and brotherly love. The mother church at Jerusalem practised at first something which approached to a community of goods; and though this experiment was not altogether successful, and does not seem to have been extended to other Christian societies, the thought of the Church as a brotherhood, involving new relationships and obligations, was general wherever the faith made its way. The Christians of the sub-apostolic age had their limitations and imperfections,

but the spirit of fellowship was as strong among them as it had been in Apostolic days. Thus Clement of Rome begins his letter to the church of Corinth by enlarging on the magnificent hospitality of that body to all brother Christians who visited the isthmus; their "insatiable yearning to do good," their unceasing intercessions for the brotherhood, their tender sympathy with weak or fallen brethren.[1] This note of brotherly love was so strongly marked that it arrested the attention of the heathen. "There are those (Tertullian remarks) who look upon the work of love as a brand which marks Christians with a distinctive character: 'see,' they say, 'how they love one another'—for the heathen themselves hate each other—'and how ready they are to die for one another'—for the heathen are more ready to kill others than to die for them."[2] "As to our calling ourselves 'brethren' (he adds), Christians have a far better right to use that name than those who claim it on the ground of natural affinity, seeing that Christians acknowledge One God as their Father, and have all drunk into one Spirit of holiness." "They know one another," writes another early apologist, "by certain marks and signs, and they love one another almost before they become known."[3] This freemasonry of early Christianity was accompanied by

[1] Clement of Rome, 1 Cor. 1 f.
[2] Tertullian, *apol.* 39.
[3] Minucius Felix, 9.

visible and tangible results. The heathen satirist, Lucian, draws a picture of the attentions paid to an imprisoned Christian by his coreligionists which is meant to be humorous, but is, in fact, a strong testimony to the fervour of early Christian brotherliness. One Peregrinus—a *nom de guerre*—was caught by the authorities, and flung into gaol; and from that moment he became an object of unceasing devotion on the part of his fellow-Christians. From early morning the prison doors were beset by friends, who sought access to the prisoner, and ministered to his wants. They brought him dainty food, they read to him out of their sacred books, they spoke of him as a second Socrates; they bribed the gaoler to let them pass the night with him.[1]

Lucian wrote in Asia Minor, during the second century. From the middle of the third century there comes from Alexandria a moving tale of the devotion of the Christians of that city to their brethren at a time of pestilence. The passage, which is from the pen of Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, deserves to be quoted at length. "Most of the brethren, of their exceeding love and brotherly kindness, did not spare themselves, but visited the sick, regardless of the risk; diligently waiting upon them, and tending them for Christ's sake, they gladly shared their death.... In this manner the best of our brethren

[1] Lucian, *Peregr.* ii. ff.; cf. Jebb, *Essays*, p. 186 f.

left us, and a death of this kind, encountered because of great piety and strong faith, was felt not to fall short of martyrdom. The heathen, on the other hand, drove the sick from them the moment the symptoms appeared, and fled from their dearest, casting them down in the streets when already half-dead; as for the dead, they threw them out like refuse, without burial, in their endeavour to escape from the contagion."[1]

Such facts tell their own tale. The Church was distinguished from the beginning by the spirit of fellowship, and it can only be regarded as an accident if the phrase which expresses it finds no place either in the New Testament or in early Christian literature. The Communion of Saints was always characteristic of the Christian Society, although it seems to have had no recognized name during the first three centuries.

3. The Communion of Saints has no place in any of the great Eastern creeds, nor in any Western creed before the second half of the fourth century. All the older forms of the Western creed confess "the Holy Church" without the addition which now follows immediately in the *Apostolicum*.

The additional words appear for the first time, as

[1] See Feltoe, *Dionysius of Alexandria*, p. 82 ff.; the passage is cited by Eus. *H.E.* vii. 22.

it seems, in a creed which bears the name of Jerome.[1] This creed ends: "I believe in the remission of sins in the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the Resurrection of the flesh unto life everlasting." An old Armenian creed contains the words in a similar connexion,[2] and it has been suggested by the eminent patristic scholar, Dom Morin, that they came to the knowledge of Jerome from an Armenian source during the travels in Asia Minor which preceded his settlement in Syria.[3] Morin further suggests that the Armenian Creed derived the words from Caesarea, whose Bishop, Firmilian, shortly after the middle of the third century, supported Cyprian and the North African Church in their refusal to recognize the validity of schismatical or heretical baptism. To do so would be, in Cyprian's words, to admit into the Church a *communio malorum*—a phrase which might easily have suggested the antithesis, *sanctorum communio*. There is no direct evidence that the latter form of words was used either by Cyprian or by Firmilian; but it may have originated in this way;

[1] Printed in Dom Morin's *Anecdota Maredsolana*, iii. p. 199, under the heading, "De fide Hieronymi presbyteri." The words are: "credo remissionem peccatorum in sancta ecclesia catholica, sanctorum communionem, carnis resurrectionem, et vitam aeternam."

[2] A German translation is given by Hahn (p. 155) from Caspari, *Quellen*, ii. p. 11 f., which runs: "Wir glauben an die Vergebung der Sünden in der heiligen Kirche, und der Gemeinschaft der Heiligen."

[3] Cf. Morin, *Sanctorum Communionem* (Macon, 1904)—a reprint from the *Revue d'histoire*, ix. (1904), 3.

and the conjecture of the learned Benedictine, strengthened by arguments which cannot be reproduced here, is attractive and not improbable.

Before the death of Jerome, *sanctorum communio* had found its way into a European baptismal creed. Niceta, Bishop of Remesiana, in Dacia, who flourished in the early years of the fifth century, wrote a commentary on the Creed, from which we gather that the local creed of Baptism contained "the Communion of Saints."[1] Dom Morin suggests that the words were brought into Dacia by Goths whose forefathers had learnt their Christian faith from captives they had taken in Pontus and Cappadocia during the reigns of Valerian and Gallienus.[2]

However this may have been, the insertion of the words in the creed of Niceta marks the beginning of their symbolical use in the West. They are next found in the creeds of South Gaul, fifty years later. As Dr. Sanday,[3] following Duchesne, has pointed

[1] See A. E. Burn, *Niceta*, p. 48: "post confessionem beatae Trinitatis iam profiteris te credere *sanctam ecclesiam catholicam* . . . in hac una ecclesia credis te *communionem* consecuturum esse *sanctorum*."

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 26.

[3] Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, p. 91 ff.; Sanday, in *J. T. S.* iii. p. 14. Kattenbusch (*Apost. Symbol.* ii. p. 927 ff.) holds with less probability that the words travelled in the opposite direction, from Gaul to Dacia. It is true that they already appear in a canon of a Gallican Council, held at Nîmes in 394 (Hefele, ii. p. 403); but they are not cited there from a creed, and their occurrence only proves that the thought of a communion of saints was already working in the West.

out, a strong current flowed in those days from the Balkans, through Aquileia to Milan, whence it would pass easily to Lerins. In any case *sanctorum communionem* follows *sanctam ecclesiam catholicam* in a series of Gallican creeds from the middle of the fifth century onwards; in those of Faustus, Bishop of Riez (449-462), and previously Abbot of Lerins, and Caesarius, Bishop of Arles (503-543);[1] in a creed embodied in a Gallican sermon attributed to St Augustine,[2] and in creed-forms found in the Gallican sacramentaries.[3] From Gaul the new clause passed to Ireland and to Britain; it appears in the *Bangor Antiphonary* (cent. VII.)[4] and in the *Book of Deer* (cent. VIII.); an Anglo-Saxon creed of the ninth century shews that it had by that time made its way into Saxon England.[5] At Rome the Gallican form of the Apostles' Creed seems to have come into use under Pope Nicholas I. (858-867); although there were parts of Italy where the old Roman creed, which knew nothing of the Gallican additions, lingered on to the end of cent. XII.[6]

It is more important to discover, if we can, the meaning or meanings attached to the Communion

[1] Hahn, p. 72 f. [2] Aug. app. *serm.* 242. [3] Hahn, pp. 75 f., 78.

[4] *Bangor Antiphonary* (ed. Warren), p. 19^{r}; the form is interesting: "credo . . . sanctam esse ecclesiam catholicam, abremissa peccatorum, sanctorum communionem, carnis resurrectionem; credo vitam post mortem, et vitam aeternam in gloria Christi."

[5] Hahn, p. 86 f. [6] Cf. Burn, *Introduction to the Creeds*, p. 232 f.

of Saints by those who introduced the words into the Creed, or recited it in days when they had not yet been generally adopted. Here we are helped by the comments of early interpreters of the *Apostolicum*. To begin with Niceta. "What is the Church (he asks) but the congregation of all saints? From the beginning of the world patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and all other righteous men who have lived or are now alive or shall live in time to come, are one Church, since they have been sanctified by one faith and manner of life and sealed by one Spirit and so are made one Body, of which Christ is the Head, as the Scripture teaches.... In this one Church you believe that you will attain to the Communion of Saints. Know that this one Catholic Church is planted throughout the whole world, and that it is your duty to hold fast to its communion. There are false churches, but you have nothing in common with them; they have ceased to be holy churches, since they believe and act otherwise than Christ our Lord commanded and the Apostles delivered."[1]

Here the Communion of Saints appears to stand for the ultimate fellowship of the blessed, anticipated and partly realized in the fellowship of the Catholic Church on earth.

A Gallican homily on the Creed attributed to Faustus of Riez limits the Saints to martyrs and

[1] Burn, *Niceta*, p. 48 f.

other departed Christians of recognized sanctity. The Communion of Saints is contrasted with the Church militant. "The Catholic Church," Faustus preaches, "is the Church diffused by the light of grace throughout the world.... Let us believe also in the Communion of Saints; but let us venerate the Saints... for God's honour and glory.... The Saints receive of His enlightening grace, and His likeness.... Let us reverence in the Saints their fear and love of God—the merits which are not their own, but which they have been thought worthy to receive for their devotion to Him. They deserve our veneration, inasmuch as their contempt of death teaches us to serve God and to long for the life to come."[1]

Faustus is here clearly endeavouring to defend, and at the same time to safeguard and guide, the growing cult of martyrs, which the Aquitanian priest, Vigilantius, had vainly sought to check.[2] In another Gallican sermon on the Creed the apology degenerates into intemperate censure of the Vigilantian party. "This clause in the Creed," it says, "puts to shame those who blasphemously deny that the ashes of the Saints are to be had in honour—who do

[1] Caspari, *Anecdota*, p. 338.

[2] Jerome's book against Vigilantius was written in 406, but Vigilantius seems to have lived for many years after it appeared. His views took root in South Gaul, where his early life was passed. Cf. Duchesne, *Fastes épiscopaux*, ii. pp. 3, 98.

not hold that the glorious memory of the blessed martyrs is to be venerated by doing honour to their shrines. Such persons sin against their Creed, and have lied to Christ at the font."[1] The new clause, it is clear, was used in South Gaul at this time for a polemical purpose, and the Church suffered loss accordingly; the conception was narrowed to that of fellowship between the living Church and the comparatively few departed saints who had earned the honour of martyrdom. Even when the words were not employed in the interests of controversy, a more or less restricted meaning was given to them in Gallican expositions of this period. Thus one of these documents defines the Communion of Saints as "the fellowship by which we are bound up with saints who have departed in the faith that we have received";[2] while another has the remark that in eternity the gifts of the Spirit, which here differ in different individuals, will be the common property of all, and each of the saints will find his own deficiencies supplied by the virtues of others—where the fellowship contemplated is altogether removed to the sphere of the future life.[3]

Other views prevailed elsewhere. Not a few of the interpreters of the Creed took *sanctorum* as neuter, and by *sanctorum communionem* understood

[1] Caspari, *alte u. neue Quellen*, p. 273 f. [2] Aug. app. *serm.* 242.
[3] Aug app. *serm.* 240.

the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Holy Eucharist. Thus a sermon of the Carolingian period explains the words to mean "Holy Communion through the invocation of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in which all the faithful ought to participate every Lord's Day."[1] In the middle ages the same view is expressed by Abelard,[2] and a Norman-French version of the Creed renders the words "La communiun des seintes choses."[3] But a larger and sounder exposition of the clause is occasionally found. Thus in the beautiful Sarum Order for the Visitation of the Sick, the priest is directed to explain to the dying man the articles of his faith, and when he comes to the Communion of Saints, he is to say that the words mean that "all men who live in charity are partakers of all the gifts of grace which are dispensed in the Church, and that all who partake with the righteous in grace while they are here, shall partake in glory in the life to come."[4]

Three specimens may be added of interpretations hazarded in English documents of the reign of Henry VIII. The first is from Marshall's *Primer*

[1] Cited by Morin, p. 8.

[2] Migne, *P. L.* clxxviii. 629. The words are: "possumus et *sanctorum* dicere neutraliter, id est, sanctificati panis et vini in sacramentum altaris."

[3] Heurtley, *Harmonia Symbolia*, p. 93. This interpretation is still supported by Zahn, *Das Apost. Symbolum*, p. 88 ff.

[4] Maskell, *monumenta ritualia*, i. p. 76.

of 1534-5, a private venture of no authority, but interesting as setting forth a view which may have been current at that time. "I believe (it says) that in all the world, be it never so great, there is one common Christian Church, which is none other thing but the congregation and communion of holy men, that is, of righteous and faithful men on the earth.... I believe that in this communion or Christianity all the prayers and good works of this congregation do necessarily help me, weigh on my side, and comfort me in all times of life and death."[1] The last clause of this explanation is expanded at some length in the official Bishops' Book (*The Institution of a Christian Man*, 1537) which interprets the "tenth article of the Creed" to mean that "between and among all and singular the Saints, that is to say, the quick and living members of the Catholic Church of Christ, which is His mystical body, there is a perfect communion and participation of all and singular the graces of the Holy Ghost, and the spiritual goods and treasure which do belong unto the said whole body, or unto every part or member of the same"; with much more to the same purpose.[2] The Notes and Observations on the Creed, however, which follow, give a large choice of interpretations: some

[1] *Three Primers set forth in the reign of Henry VIII.* (Oxford, 1848), p. 43.

[2] *Formularies of Faith set forth during the reign of Henry VIII.* (Oxford, 1856), p. 57.

regard "the Communion of Saints" as simply explanatory of "the Holy Catholic Church"; some think of the common utility and profit that members of Christ's Body do receive by the "common merits, sufferings, and prayers of the whole Church." Some, again, take it to refer to the Communion of the Sacraments, while others see in it no more than "the unity which is between Christ and all true Christian men." Lastly, there are those who hold that by this clause is intended "the treasure of the Church," namely, the Holy Spirit and His graces, and all other gifts and blessings which belong to us so long as we belong to the unity of the Catholic Church.[1]

The Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man, commonly called the *King's Book* (1543), treads more firmly. "Although (it teaches) this word 'Saints' in our English tongue signifieth properly them that be departed this life, and be established in glory with Christ, yet the same word 'Saints'... is here extended to signify not only these before mentioned, but also all such as be called into this holy assembly and Church, and be sanctified in our Saviour Jesus Christ." As to the word "communion," the *King's Book* allows two interpretations: (1) "the utility and profit which all the members of the Church do receive by the merits,

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 78 ff.

suffrages, and prayers of the Church"; and (2) "the Sacrament of the Altar, which we must believe to be a real and effectual communion of all saints."[1]

Evidently the meaning of this article of the Creed was involved in great uncertainty during Henry's reign. The Book of Common Prayer, as it appeared in 1549, lent its sanction to the broadest view of the words, speaking of the elect as knit together "in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of Christ our Lord," and defining the mystical body of Christ as "the blessed company of all faithful people."[2] Both these expressions find a place in our present Prayerbook, and sufficiently convey the judgement of the English Church upon the subject. The Communion of Saints, as understood by our Reformers, is the fellowship which binds together all the members of the Church, living and departed. In the words of Bishop Pearson, the Aquinas of the Anglican Communion, "such persons ... besides the external fellowship which they have in the Word and Sacraments with all the members of the Church, have an intimate union and conjunction with all the saints on earth, as the living members of Christ; nor is this union separated by the death of any ... but

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 249 f.

[2] Collect for All Saints' Day, and prayer before the Blessing at Holy Communion.

they have fellowship with all the saints which . . . have ever departed in the true faith and fear of God."[1]

The Communion of Saints, as an article of the Western Creed, has had a singular history. Suggested originally, as we may perhaps assume, by the exigencies of controversy, whether it owed its birth to the Novatianist troubles of the third century,[2] or to the Donatist[3] or the Vigilantian[4] movement of the fifth, the clause served at first a polemical purpose. But whatever was the occasion which led to the words being inserted in the Western baptismal Creed, and however narrow the sense put upon them when they were first recited at the font, or explained in addresses to catechumens or to the newly baptized, they express one of the most profound convictions of the Christian consciousness, that a spiritual fellowship unites all who are in Christ, whether on earth or among the immense majority who have passed into the intermediate state. In our English Church, in any case, it is this great thought which rises to the mind whenever in repeating the creed of our baptism we come to the words, "I believe in . . . the Communion of Saints." The phrase is neither

[1] Pearson, *Exposition of the Creed, ad loc.*

[2] Dom Morin's suggestion (see above, p. 158).

[3] So I had suggested in 1894. (*The Apostles' Creed: its relation to primitive Christianity*, p. 36 f.)

[4] So Harnack, *Das Apost. Glaubensbekenntniss* (1893).

Biblical nor primitive, and the meaning which it suggested to those who first placed it in the Creed may have been altogether inadequate; but the words themselves have always held the fuller truth, and to us to-day they convey it afresh as often as we recite the articles of our belief.

II

THE COMMUNION OF THE SAINTS WITH GOD

THE communion of saints with their fellow-saints, here or hereafter, rests upon the communion of all saints with God. There is indeed no evidence that fellowship with God was in the minds of those who were responsible for the first appearance of the phrase in writings and creeds of the fourth and fifth centuries; nor has this thought entered largely into the later interpretation of the Creed.[1] But the New Testament clearly teaches that there is an intimate connexion between the fellowship of believers with God, and their fellowship with one another; and a little consideration will shew that this must needs be so.

1. "Our fellowship," St John writes, "is with the Father."[2] He speaks on behalf of all who had seen and handled the manifestation of God which

[1] Pearson, however, with characteristic thoroughness, expounds the Communion of Saints as including communion with the Holy Trinity.

[2] 1 John i. 3 *ἡ κοινωνία ἡ ἡμετέρα μετὰ τοῦ πατρός.*

was made in the Person of Jesus Christ. That manifestation had revealed God as a Father who loves His children, and desires their society. When Christ taught His disciples to say, "Our Father," He taught them that God stands in a fatherly relation to men, and that there is in human nature that which witnesses to this affinity, a sonship which in its measure corresponds with the eternal Sonship that subsists within the Godhead itself. "God," writes the great Athanasius, "did not barely create men, but made them after His own image, giving them a portion of the power of His own Word; so that possessing a kind of reflexion of the Word (λόγος), and being made rational (λογικοί), they might be able to abide for ever in blessedness, living the true life." And again: "He gave us freely, by the grace of the Word, the power to live a life in correspondence with God."[1] Of this correspondence with the Divine Nature, fellowship with God is the natural outcome, and the story of Eden apparently represents this fellowship as having been real and intimate before the Fall; the Lord God is seen walking in the Garden, and His voice is heard calling Adam,[2] as if Adam had been accustomed to receive Divine visits, to meet and converse with the Divine Father. Sin put an end to this free intercourse; fellowship was interrupted, man driven out of God's

[1] Athan. *de incarnatione*, 3, 6. [2] Gen. iii. 8.

paradise. Yet later chapters of Genesis contain examples of restored communion: cases such as those of Abel, to whom and to whose offering the Lord had respect;[1] Enoch, who walked with God, and was not, for God took him;[2] Abraham, who "was called the friend of God,"[3] and with reference to whom God said, "Shall I hide from Abraham that which I do?"[4] These exceptions, and many others in subsequent books of the Old Testament, teach that man's broken communion with the Father of his spirit could in certain circumstances be restored. Moreover, Israel as a whole was the people of God, and in covenant with Him;[5] and the religion of Israel provided means by which individuals could approach God in acts of worship, by the offering of prescribed sacrifices at the place which God chose to put His Name there; and there are abundant signs that in the use of such means the devout Israelite was able to attain to something more than a merely ceremonial access. Such Psalms as the 63rd, the 73rd, and the 121st, such prophetic utterances as are to be found in both parts of Isaiah, bear witness to the existence in Israel of a fervour of spiritual communion which can hardly be surpassed under the New Covenant.

[1] Gen. iv. 4.
[2] Gen. v. 24.
[3] Jas. ii. 23 (see Mayor's note).
[4] Gen. xviii. 17.
[5] Exod. xix. 5 f., xxiv. 7.

Yet the Divine Father of men had better things in store for His children than a fellowship restricted to a few individuals or a chosen race. "In the fulness of time God sent forth His Son . . . that we might receive the adoption of sons."[1] Through the Only-begotten Son the adopted sons have free access to the Father. The Father, indeed, remains invisible, dwelling in an inaccessible temple of light.[2] But the invisibility of God is no obstacle to a fellowship which is purely spiritual, and the light which envelopes Him does not prohibit the approach of those who "walk in the light," and whom "the Blood of Jesus His Son cleanses from all sin."[3] Since the Incarnation and the Passion there is a Way to the Father through the Son, Who is the Image of the invisible God,[4] and Who, Himself man, mediates between God and men.

Fellowship with the Father is thus reopened for all members of the Church. Through the Incarnate we have our access to the Father, admission at all times and in all places to audience with God, and the free right of speech when we are in His Presence.[5] The prayers and praises of the Church are normally addressed not to the Son, but to the Father, in accordance with our Lord's own words: "whatsoever

[1] Gal. iv. 4. [2] 1 Tim. vi. 16 *φῶς οἰκῶν ἀπρόσιτον.*

[3] 1 John i. 7. [4] Col. i. 15.

[5] Eph. ii. 18 *ἔχομεν τὴν προσαγωγὴν . . . πρὸς τὸν πατέρα*: iii. 12 *τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ προσαγωγὴν ἐν πεποιθήσει διὰ τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ.*

ye shall ask the Father, he will give it you in my name."[1] The Son is the avenue through which communications pass, but it is to the Father that they are ordinarily addressed. To secure this fellowship with the Source of Godhead was the very purpose of the Passion: Christ suffered "that He might bring us to God."[2]

"Our fellowship is with the Father." This privilege belongs to the Church. It was won by the Incarnation and the Cross for all mankind, but it is actually possessed only by the Body of Christ, and exercised only by its true members. Men who do not pray or give thanks, who forsake the assembling of themselves together and the great act of Eucharistic worship which Christ commanded, do not realize, or realize only in small part, the communion of the Church with God. Only the saints, those who have been consecrated to the service of the Holy Trinity, and who use their privilege by actually approaching the Father through the Son, both in private and in the congregation, can know the joy and the glory of entering into the holiest of all and speaking with God, as sons with their Father, in the fellowship of prayer and praise.

2. St John distinguishes between fellowship with the Father and fellowship with the Son; both, he

[1] John xvi. 23. [2] 1 Pet. iii. 18.

says in effect, are ours.[1] God has called us (St Paul writes) "into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."[2]

Before the Incarnation the Word, the Eternal Image of God, was already in contact with man, who was made after the Divine Image. In Proverbs the Wisdom of God speaks of her joy in God's habitable earth, and her "delight" being "with the sons of men."[3] The Alexandrian Book of Wisdom plays on the same note: "Wisdom is a spirit that loveth man . . . from generation to generation passing into holy souls, she maketh men friends of God and prophets."[4] So in the prologue to the fourth Gospel the life which was in the Word is said to have been "the light of men," a light "which lighteth every man." There was, however, as yet no response on man's part; "the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness apprehended it not." "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not; He came unto His own (*τὰ ἴδια*), and they that were His own (*οἱ ἴδιοι*) received

[1] 1 John i. 3 *μετὰ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ μετὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ*: the repetition of the preposition suggests that two forms or aspects of fellowship are contemplated.

[2] 1 Cor. i. 9.

[3] Prov. viii. 31. The LXX gives a different turn to the words: *ἐνευφραίνετο* [Κύριος] *τὴν οἰκουμένην συντελέσας, καὶ εὐφραίνετο ἐν υἱοῖς ἀνθρώπων.*

[4] Wisdom i. 6 *φιλάνθρωπον πνεῦμα σοφίας*: vii. 27.

Him not." Not even Israel, the people of God, answered the call of the Word.[1]

The Incarnation opened new communications between the Word and mankind. He "tabernacled among us,"[2] taking His part for a time in human history, revealing Himself under the conditions of ordinary human life. And in revealing Himself He revealed God; men beheld in Him the glory of God, the fulness of grace and truth manifested in the Only-begotten Son. He 'came and spake' to His own generation in Galilee and at Jerusalem such words as, on the testimony of men who were not His disciples, "never man spake"; He did among them works which "none other did."[3] A few chosen disciples were taken into intimate companionship for a time, but of fellowship in the deeper sense there was little or none until the human life of the Incarnate was transfigured by the Resurrection, and taken up at the Ascension into the invisible world. Spiritual fellowship began when bodily contact ceased: "touch me not," the Lord said to one who would have detained Him after the Resurrection, "for I am not yet ascended unto the Father."[4] Communion with Jesus Christ began when His Spirit came to abide with His Church for ever.[5]

[1] John i. 11. [2] John i. 14.
[3] John xv. 22, vii. 46, xv. 24.
[4] John i. 11. [5] John xiv. 16 ff.

This spiritual fellowship with Him is described by our Lord in terms of the vital union which subsists between a tree and its branches: "I am the Vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit."[1] But He also sees an analogy between His fellowship with the members of His Church and that which exists between the Father and Himself: "That they may all be one, even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee."[2] The analogy is not of course, complete; for the fellowship of the Father and the Son belong to the mystery of the essential oneness of the Divine Persons, whereas the Nature of God and the nature of man, although capable of fellowship, are essentially and infinitely different. Nevertheless "the true unity of believers" is "something far more than a mere moral unity of purpose, feeling, affection; it is, in some mysterious mode which we cannot distinctly apprehend, a vital unity."[3] The fellowship which springs from this unity is an interchange not simply of words or acts or sympathies, but of life: the life of the Incarnate is passed into His Saints, and their life is, in a mystery, merged in His, and identified with it. "I live," St Paul exclaims, "and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me."[4] The Apostle's frequent use of the formula "in

[1] John xv. 1-3.
[2] John xvii. 21.
[3] Westcott on St John, *ad loc.*
[4] Gal. ii. 20.

Christ" calls attention to the other side of this mystical union, and offers another view of the fellowship. 'Christ in us' is the source of all spiritual life: "of his fulness we all received, and grace for grace";[1] each supply of grace infused into us by the Spirit of Christ is the harbinger and forerunner of another, so long as the union lasts. We are, no less truly, "in Christ," *i.e.* identified with Him in His incarnate life. Buried into the death of Christ by Baptism, we have also been raised up with Him, and made to sit with Him in the heavenly world. Our fellowship with Him raises us up into the higher life, where He now is. As He is in us here, so we are in Him there; mystically, we are already in Heaven, since He is there in Whom we live.[2]

Of this supernatural fellowship the Sacrament of the Eucharist is at once the perpetual symbol and an effectual means. Fellowship with Christ depends on the Incarnation and the Passion, considered not as historical events, but as spiritual facts apprehended by faith and love. This is represented in the discourse at Capernaum by the startling words, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have not life in yourselves.... he that eateth my flesh

[1] John i. 16 χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος, one supply taking the place of another: "grace upon grace."

[2] Eph. ii. 6 συνήγειρεν καὶ συνεκάθισεν.

and drinketh my blood hath eternal life"; he "abideth in me, and I in him."[1] What the Lord taught at Capernaum a year before the Passion, He embodied on Maundy Thursday in a great permanent rite. But the rite was intended to be far more than a symbolical representation of the teaching; it was to be also the chief means of giving effect to the doctrine taught. By it our Lord has willed to give His Body and His Blood to all generations of the faithful. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the Blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not a communion of the Body of Christ?"[2] "A communion," that is, as the Vulgate explains, a communication, a participation; a means whereby all Christians who receive the Gift worthily, *i.e.* as Christ willed it to be received, are made joint partakers in all the benefits of the Incarnation and the Passion, and enjoy that intimate fellowship with Him which He calls 'abiding in Him,' and which He reciprocates by abiding in them. In the words of the Book of Common Prayer,[3] "if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that Holy Sacrament . . ., then

[1] John vi. 53, 56.

[2] 1 Cor. x. 16 *οὐχὶ κοινωνία ἐστὶν τοῦ αἵματος . . . τοῦ σώματος*; Vulg. *communicatio sanguinis . . . participatio corporis*: the double rendering seems to be arbitrary, since *κοινωνία* stands twice in the text without variant. *Participatio* suggests *μετοχή*: cf. *v.* 17 *μετέχομεν*, Vulg. *participamus*: on *κοινωνία* and *μετοχή* cf. Brooke on 1 John i. 3.

[3] Exhortation "at the time of the celebration of the Communion."

we dwell in Christ and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us."

The Eucharist is the most outstanding means of communion with Christ. Therein He comes to us by a special sacramental presence, of which we are at times conscious as we kneel at the Altar, which our faith apprehends but does not create; therein also we rise to Him into the heavenly places, where He now is with God. No words in any other Christian rite approach so near to the worship of Heaven as the *Ter Sanctus* and parts of the *Gloria in excelsis*; no other religious act so distinctly proclaims that the Church is in fellowship with her ascended Lord. The very name of 'Holy Communion' by which it is known to English Churchmen bears witness to this purpose of the Eucharist. But to say this is not to exclude other opportunities of fellowship, or to tie the grace of Christ, as He has not tied it, to Sacramental Communion. It is possible that the broken prayers of an illiterate believer may place him on a higher level than many reach with the help of the most uplifting of Eucharistic celebrations. And we know that "if by any just impediment a man is hindered from receiving the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood,"[1] he may be assured that spiritual communion will suffice. The essential thing is not the external act of Communion, important as that is, but the

[1] See the third rubric after the Communion of the Sick.

union and fellowship with Himself which the Lord is pleased ordinarily to give through the Sacrament. When these are attained, the purpose of the Sacrament, as far as regards the individual Christian, has been fulfilled, even if for reasons beyond human control the Sacrament itself cannot be administered or cannot be received.

3. Twice in his Epistles St Paul speaks of the communion of the Spirit: in his final prayer for the Corinthian church, "the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all";[1] and when he pleads with the Philippians, "If there is any communion of the Spirit, ... fulfil ye my joy, that ye be of the same mind."[2] Both the great English versions use 'communion' in the first of these passages and 'fellowship' in the second, and the Vulgate makes a similar distinction.[3] The words, in fact, admit in each case of more than one interpretation; they may signify either joint participation in the Spirit, or fellowship with the Spirit, or again, the fellowship between believers created by their common possession of the One Spirit; and the context only can determine which of these meanings is to be adopted. In 2 Cor.

[1] 2 Cor. xiii. 13 *ἡ κοινωνία τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν.*

[2] Phil. ii. 1 *εἴ τις κοινωνία πνεύματος.*

[3] In 2 Cor. *l.c.* it has *communicatio Sancti Spiritus*: in Phil., *societas Spiritus.*

xiii. 14 the first of them seems to agree best with the context; as the grace of Christ and the love of God are blessings which are received from above, so the communion of the Holy Spirit is probably the share of the gift of the Spirit which falls to each of the members of Christ's Body. In Philippians, on the other hand, we are led by the general drift of the passage to think of the fellowship which makes men to be of one mind in God's House, and which the Holy Spirit inspires. But between these two conceptions there lies a third—the fellowship of the Holy Spirit with the human spirit, which results from the first and leads on to the second. It is, in fact, impossible to separate the three except in thought, and therefore impossible when one of them is named to rule out the other two; although one meaning may predominate in one passage and another in another, the senses which are not primary cannot be excluded altogether. To receive the Spirit is to have fellowship with the Spirit, and all who have fellowship with the Spirit have fellowship in Him with one another.

The communion of the Holy Spirit is not to be identified with our fellowship with Christ, although the former is inseparable from the latter. The Son was sent into the world, the Spirit into the heart.[1] The fellowship of the Spirit with the human spirit is immediate and direct. He who searches the deep

[1] Cf. Gal. iv. 4-6.

things of God[1] enters also into the depths of our inner man. Our bodies become His shrine;[2] but His presence is out of sight, in the *penetralia* of our spirits, where He throws His searchlight upon our unspoken thoughts and desires. His purpose is to carry forward the work of the Divine philanthropy begun in the Incarnation, to make it bear on the centre of our being, regenerating and renewing the springs of our life,[3] changing our thoughts, shedding abroad within us the love of God, helping our infirmity, making intercession for the saints according to the will of God, sanctifying our whole nature in spirit, soul, and body.[4] But this work of sanctification is not a mechanical process, or an automatic growth; it is the result of the interaction of the Divine and the human in the inner life of men. It is the outcome of daily fellowship between the Spirit of God and the spirit of man. On the part of the Divine Spirit there is the constant inspiration of good desires, and the infusion of strength sufficient to bring them to good effect; on the part of the human spirit, the responsive action by which the inspiration is assimilated, and the strength is made the man's very own.[5] In experience it is difficult or even impossible to distinguish the one from the other. Just as ideas

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 10 f. [2] 1 Cor. vi. 19: cf. iii. 16. [3] Tit. iii. 4-6.

[4] Rom. viii. 5 f., v. 5, viii. 26 f.; 1 Thess. v. 23.

[5] Phil. ii. 13 *θεὸς γάρ ἐστιν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ τὸ θέλειν καὶ τὸ ἐνεργεῖν.*

which we derive from books or from conversation with our fellow-men become in course of time so completely our own, are so identified with the rest of our intellectual property that we can no longer trace them to their source, or even determine whether they are borrowed or original, so it is in the life of the spirit; our volitions and emotions, our actions and refusals to act, are our own, and yet not our own; if they are according to the Divine will, they are originally of the Holy Spirit, who co-operates with us in the mystery of grace. This co-operation of God and man enters into every detail of the spiritual life, whether we are conscious of it or not. There may, indeed, be conditions under which the action of the Divine Spirit can be distinctly recognized and His voice heard within. "The Spirit itself (St Paul says) beareth joint witness with our spirit, that we are children of God"; [1] together with the faltering, uncertain, testimony of our own consciousness there may be heard from time to time a witness which we know to be Divine. But ordinarily the fellowship is so close, the identification so complete, that the result may be attributed with equal correctness to ourselves, as led by the Spirit, or to the Spirit who leads. Thus St Paul can speak indifferently of "the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father," and of the Spirit as Himself

[1] Rom. viii. 16 *αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα συνμαρτυρεῖ τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν.* Cf. ix. 1 *συμμαρτυρούσης μοι τῆς συνειδήσεώς μου ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ.*

uttering the same filial cry within our hearts.[1] The cry is His, and it is ours : His cry in us, and ours in Him.

Thus the communion of the Holy Spirit—our fellowship with Him and His with us, is the normal condition of the Christian life, without which there can be no life in Christ which is worthy of the name.[2] It is also a fact of Christian experience, although from the nature of the Spirit's operations they cannot usually be distinguished from the thoughts, affections, desires, and actions which He prompts and energizes. No Christian will fail to acknowledge that whatever is good in him is not of himself, but of the Holy Spirit. This is, in fact, to recognize that the Holy Spirit is at work at the springs of his new life ; that he owes to fellowship with the Spirit the whole structure of the new self which is rising up within him—his faith, his love, his hope of eternal life. There would be no communion of Saints in the Church of Christ—there would be no true Saints to maintain communion with one another—if the Church had no Spirit of holiness, or no communion with Him. There could be no fellowship with the Father or with His Son Jesus Christ, if there were no fellowship of the Holy Spirit. "Through the Son we both," Jewish and Gentile believers alike, "have our access in one Spirit unto the Father." [3]

[1] Rom. viii. 15 (ἐν ᾧ κράζομεν). Gal. iv. 6 (κρᾶζον).
[2] Rom. viii. 9[b]. [3] Eph. ii. 18.

III

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS IN THE CHURCH Mmilitant

1. "THE Communion of Sacraments"—the phrase is St Augustine's[1]—is not a synonym for the Communion of Saints. The Sacraments, no doubt, are among the chief means and opportunities of fellowship with the Body of Christ; in the Sacrament of Baptism "we were all made to drink of one Spirit";[2] in the Sacrament of the Eucharist "we who are many are one bread, one body."[3] From early times admission to communion has meant admission to partake in the Sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood, and the refusal of that Sacrament to a member of the Church has been understood to be a refusal of Christian fellowship.[4] It is indeed inconceivable that the Com-

[1] Aug. *de civit. Dei*, i. 35. It occurs also in Augustine's junior contemporary Leo (*serm.* 42. 5).

[2] 1 Cor. xii. 13. [3] 1 Cor. x. 17.

[4] Cf. Tert. *de bapt.* 15 "ademptio communicationis"; Cyprian, *ep.* 16 "ad communicationem admittere"; *ib.* 17 "ad communicationem venire" (cf. *Studia Biblica*, iv. p. 268 f.).

munion of Saints can exist when the Sacraments which Christ ordained as the symbols and means of Christian unity are deliberately rejected, or when the Church has by a just judgement withheld them.

Yet participation in the Sacraments does not of itself constitute fellowship with the Saints in the highest sense of the words. For evil men as well as good partake of the Sacraments. "The City of God (writes St Augustine), so long as she sojourns in the world as in a strange land, has with her those who are of the number of her enemies; they are joined to her for the present in the communion of the Sacraments, but they will not be with her in the eternal portion of the saints."[1] This "external fellowship" is secured to such persons by the Sacraments of which they partake in common with the true members of the Church; but in the inner and spiritual fellowship, which is the heart and substance of the Communion of Saints, they have "neither part nor lot."[2]

Yet external communion with the Body of Christ is in itself no light privilege and no small responsibility. No baptized man can be as the unbaptized; he belongs to the family of God, even though he be a disobedient or a prodigal son; he is a branch in the Vine, though he be dead and barren of fruit.

[1] Aug. *l.c.* "connexos communione sacramentorum nec secum futuros in aeterna sorte sanctorum."

[2] Cf. Acts viii. 21.

Nor is Eucharistic communion an empty form in the case of unworthy recipients. Such persons are, according to St Paul, guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord; they eat and drink judgement unto themselves if they discern not the Body.[1] Their communions do not indeed make them, in any true sense, partakers of Christ; but they bring them into touch with a tremendous Reality, the Presence of Christ in the Sacrament. If through their sin the Sacramental Presence is not beneficial to them, it is hurtful.[2] He who is near Christ is near the fire;[3] and the fire, if it does not give warmth and life, may burn and consume. Such nearness, such contact, is not fellowship; it spells death to the unworthy. Yet near they are, even if the Sacraments are to them a savour of death unto death. Moreover, it is never to be forgotten that those who are now joined to the Church only by external fellowship may one day rise to the fellowship of the Spirit.[4] And when this happens, the Sacraments at once recover their proper effects. Repentance and absolution restore the full

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 27-29.

[2] Aug. *in Joann. tr.* vi. 15 "et sancta possunt obesse; in bonis enim sancta ad salutem insunt, in malis ad iudicium."

[3] Origen, *hom. in Jerem.* iii. "ait autem ipse Salvator, 'Qui iuxta me est iuxta ignem est.'" Didymus, *in Ps. lxxxviii.* διὸ φησὶν ὁ σωτήρ· Ὁ ἐγγὺς μου ἐγγὺς τοῦ πυρός.

[4] Aug. *de civit. Dei*, i. 35 "apud apertissimos adversarios praedestinati amici latitant, adhuc ignoti etiam sibi."

benefits of Baptism; the prodigal son returning to his Father is at once readmitted to the privileges of home life. The Eucharistic Presence is no longer a consuming fire, but a constant source of refreshing grace.

To the faithful the Communion of the Sacraments is far more than an external bond. For them the Sacraments of the Gospel fulfil their primary purpose, uniting them to God through Christ. Baptism is for them not only a putting on of the profession of Christianity, but, in St Paul's far deeper phrase, a putting on of Christ [1]—the solemn, divinely instituted rite in which Christ was "made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption," [2] and wherein we became "members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven." Baptism admits into the Christian Society, and so into the fellowship of Christ and His saints; and the whole life of the baptized, if they respond to their calling, is but the working out of the union with Christ and His Body which Baptism once for all sacramentally effected.

And what the initial Sacrament began, the Sacrament of the Eucharist carries on and perfects. The Eucharistic Presence is not vouchsafed primarily for worship, although Christ is to be worshipped whether

[1] Gal. iii. 27 ὅσοι γὰρ εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε, Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε.
[2] 1 Cor. i. 30 (cf. vi. 11).

in His Sacrament or wheresoever He may be. Still less is its purpose to excite men's fears, and so to keep them from that which is among God's greatest gifts. Rather it was designed to be our chief opportunity of fellowship with the Lord, and with the whole company of His faithful people. It is a commonplace to say that the Eucharist was originally a social meal. The primitive Church connected it with a love-feast or agapé, in which the Lord's last Supper with the Twelve was commemorated on the weekly festival of the Resurrection. The note of fellowship was struck by the very manner in which the Eucharistic gifts were dispensed : all the brethren drank of one cup, all partook of one loaf.[1] The Eucharist, it is true, is very much more than an agapé ; as the English Article warns us, it is "not only a sign of the love which Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather it is a Sacrament of our Redemption "[2]—a partaking of the Body and Blood which were sacrificed for us. But joint participation in the sacrament of a common redemption cannot but be the means of cementing the deepest and most sacred of all unions—a union

[1] The Eastern Churches still use at the Eucharist a cake or small loaf prepared by marks on its surface for subdivision. For an illustration of the Greek oblate, see Neal, *Eastern Church, General Introduction*, i. p. 342, and for the Coptic, *ibid. Patriarchate of Alexandria*, ii. p. 342; and cf. Scudamore, *Notitia Eucharistica* (ed. 2), p. 853.

[2] Art. xxviii.

between the Head and the members, and consequently between the members themselves, with the fellowship which follows from it.

The mediaeval system of private masses tended to destroy Eucharistic fellowship by permitting the priest to celebrate by himself alone, without any other communicant. It was to prevent this departure from the original purpose of the Eucharist that the Church of England in 1549 ordained that "the Priest on the weekday shall forbear to celebrate the Communion except he have some that will communicate with him," and in 1552 laid down the more stringent rule that even in the smallest parish "there shall be no communion except four (or three at the least) communicate with the Priest."[1] The minimum may be thought too large; our Lord's "two or three," as well as the practical convenience of the Church, may seem to call for a reduction. But the principle is surely sound; the plea put forward by the Council of Trent that the priest celebrates "not for himself only, but for all the faithful,"[2] does not really meet the Reformers' objection. Fellowship cannot well be vicarious; the very name of 'Holy Communion' demands a congregational act, which implies a partaking

[1] See the third rubric at the end of the Order of Holy Communion, and the final rubric after the Communion of the Sick.

[2] Conc. Trident. *sess.* xxii. c. vi. (cited by Scudamore, p. 824).

in the consecrated food by two persons at the least.

It cannot be said with justice that the Church of England depreciates in any way the Communion of Sacraments. On the contrary she gives to the Sacraments the highest place among acts of external worship; they are pronounced to be "generally necessary to salvation," *i.e.* necessary for all sorts and conditions of men; they are "effectual signs of grace," *i.e.* they effectuate the action of God's grace which they signify. The communion of sacraments is not equivalent to the communion of saints; the latter is the larger and greater thing. Nevertheless the Sacraments are the divinely appointed means for cementing and effecting the communion of saints. No Christian fellowship which ignores this sacramental basis, or seeks to be independent of it, corresponds to the New Testament ideal, or to the experience of the Catholic Church.

2. The external fellowship which is created by participation in the Sacraments is of no little importance as a social, moral, and even a spiritual force. The baptized constitute a great society, distinguished by a common name, possessing common interests, a common history and literature, a common moral code. They are, moreover, the subjects of spiritual influences, whether they respond to them or not, of which

the unbaptized have no experience. A yet closer fellowship binds in one the communicant members of the Church: a fellowship less commonly recognized by the world, but approaching nearer to an interior and spiritual bond. But neither of the two great sacraments, nor any sacramental rite whatever, can of itself admit to the communion of saints in the higher meaning of the words. As contrasted with the *communio sacramentorum*, the *sanctorum communio* is a fellowship of spirits which comes from a common fellowship with the Holy Spirit. It belongs to the sphere of the supernatural life which the Holy Spirit infuses into souls that respond to the Sacraments of grace, *i.e.* that receive and assimilate the grace of the Sacraments.

This interior life, though poured by the Spirit of Christ into individual souls, is given to them as members of the Church. The Spirit of Christ animates the Body of Christ, and its members receive His indwelling in virtue of their place in His Body. The life of the Spirit, therefore, notwithstanding that it acts upon individuals, is a corporate life, and carries with it corporate privileges and responsibilities. It involves the interdependence of all the living members of the Body, one upon another. They are, in the words of the New Testament, "members one of another."[1] No one of them is complete without the

[1] Rom. xii. 5 ἀλλήλων μέλη.

rest; none may say to his fellow-member, however different may be his position in the Body or his capacity or the nature of his work, "I have no need of thee."[1] An isolated life, self-contained, wholly occupied with personal interests, even though they be the highest interests of the individual soul, is far removed from the life of the Spirit of Christ. The man who endeavours to live his own life in Christ apart from his brethren, and indifferent to their concerns, not only falls miserably short of Christian ideals, but is immeasurably the loser by his self-willed independence. Each living member of Christ has indeed his own gift, which it is his duty to cultivate, and his own work to do;[2] but for this very reason none is complete in himself, none can dispense with the assistance of those whose gifts and spheres of work are other than his own. This principle operates far beyond the circle of our friends and neighbours; in ways unknown to us all the members of Christ's Body are necessary to the completeness of the whole, and of each individual as a part of the whole. We can feel that we are richer for the example and work of thousands of saints known to us only by name; but, in fact, all who have ever lived in faith are a heritage of priceless value, while all who are now so living are contributing to the strength and well-being of the Church, and we have a share in their

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 20 f. [2] 1 Cor. xii. 7 ff.

labour of love. Thus the Communion of Saints is far-reaching indeed, binding every devout Christian throughout the world, not in sentiment only, but in the actual interchange of a beneficent activity of which we may not be cognizant, but by which nevertheless we are helped and carried on towards perfection. The most conspicuous instance is to be found in the use of intercessory prayer, by means of which we can minister to persons whose names, whose very existence, may be unknown to us, and in our turn may receive benefit from those to whom we ourselves are equally unknown. Of this and of other forms which Christian fellowship may take, we shall have more to say presently; for the moment it is enough to notice the vastness and complexity of the process which the Church calls the Communion of Saints. It is a fellowship as wide as the world, and indeed far wider; it sets up a channel of communication between Christian souls everywhere, by which all are mutually helped, and the contribution which each brings to the treasury of the Church is made to serve for the building up of the whole Body of Christ.

The Communion of Saints is an almost automatic effect of the supernatural life which penetrates the living members of the Christian body. Without destroying or crippling individuality, the common life of the Spirit holds and keeps the Body together, in such wise that it acts as one, thinks as one, is of

one mind and will, so far as it is controlled by the One Spirit.[1] The One Spirit employs three great spiritual forces, faith, hope, and love, each of which makes for fellowship. Any faith which is held in common by a number of adherents is a bond of fellowship among them; Moslems, *e.g.* are drawn together by their simple creed, 'God is One, and Mohammed is His Prophet,' and Buddhists by their acceptance of the teaching of Gautama, so that it is no great matter if the Christian creed exercises a like influence over those who hold it, making for friendship and fellowship. But Christian faith, where it is genuine, is more than an intellectual assent to the truth of certain *credenda*; more even than a wholehearted acceptance of a common stock of ideas fruitful in their effect on conduct and character. It is primarily trust in a Person and loyalty to Him,[2] and it creates an intimate union between believers and Him on whom they believe. This mystical union has no parallel in Islam or in Buddhism; it is peculiarly Christian, and it forms the basis of a fellowship more complete than any which the other great religions of the world can offer. If to this common faith we add the common hope of eternal life, it is evident that the basis of fellowship is

[1] Rom. xii. 16 *τὸ αὐτὸ εἰς ἀλλήλους φρονοῦντες*: Phil. ii. 2 *σύνψυχοι, τὸ ἓν φρονοῦντες*; 1 Pet. iii. 8 *πάντες ὁμόφρονες.*

[2] St John's and St Paul's *πιστεύειν εἰς Χριστόν.*

immensely strengthened, since the Christian hope assures us that our life in the Church on earth is preparatory to a social life hereafter, when we shall find ourselves in the company of all the saints who have ever lived. Faith and hope bring us to the foot of the spiritual Zion, to the city of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem;[1] our citizenship is already in heaven,[2] and our intercourse with our brethren in Christ on earth is seen to be the beginning of a communion of saints which will have no end.

But there is a third factor in the life of the Spirit which makes even more directly for Christian fellowship than either faith or hope. Love, in its purest form, is essentially a Christian virtue. Although the Greek word for love (ἀγάπη) is found once or twice in non-Biblical texts, and the thing is simulated or imitated by the world, the Church alone possesses the spiritual grace of love. "Love is of God," the "fruit of the Spirit" which stands first in St Paul's great list. Within the Church love assumes a form peculiarly Christian, which the New Testament knows "as love of the brethren" (φιλαδελφία).[3] "By this (said our Lord) shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another;" "this is my

[1] Heb. xii. 22.

[2] Phil. iii. 20 ἡμῶν γὰρ τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς ὑπάρχει.

[3] Cf. 2 Pet. i. 7 ἐν δὲ τῇ εὐσεβείᾳ τὴν φιλαδελφίαν, ἐν δὲ τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ τὴν ἀγάπην.

commandment, that ye love one another."[1] In these words our Lord created a new thing in the earth. Philanthropy may exist without any true union of hearts, without any love on the part of the benefactor for the beneficiary, or of the beneficiary for the benefactor. Brotherly love, on the other hand, is mutual love of the most perfect kind; the disinterested care of brother for brother, as members of the same family, born of the same Father, brethren of the same Christ. It cuts across the lines of human relationship, following the example of Him Who said "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and sister and mother."[2] Christianity has created a vast brotherhood, and the fellowship which this brotherhood inspires is the true communion of saints.

3. So far the communion of saints has been regarded as sacramental and supernatural, an activity of the spiritual life. It remains to be seen how this hidden force manifests itself in the visible fellowship of the Church.

An obvious instance is to be found in the practice of Common Prayer. The Synagogue had its forms of public worship,[3] and our Lord seems to have contemplated some such order in His new Ecclesia. "If two

[1] John xiii. 35, xv. 12. [2] Mc. iii. 35.

[3] See Schürer, *Jewish People* (Eng. tr.), II. ii. p. 77 f.; Oesterley and Box, *Synagogue*, p. 315 f.

of you," He said, "shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven; for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."[1] Two acts of fellowship are here involved: (1) the meeting together of the disciples of Christ for the purpose of common prayer, and (2) an agreement as to the petitions to be offered at their meeting. The act of meeting in Christ's name is in itself an important witness to the corporate unity of the body, and no Christian is free to neglect it.[2] Further, the purpose of the meeting is to offer petitions upon which those who meet have agreed beforehand. This can be done either by deputing one member of the Church to speak for the rest, or by offering forms of prayer which have been accepted by the Church for common use. The primitive Church followed on the whole the former course;[3] but as time went on, experience shewed that the latter was to be preferred. A form of prayer adopted by a whole community has this advantage amongst others, that it creates a 'symphony'[4] in public prayer—an

[1] Matt. xviii. 19 f. [2] Heb. x. 25.

[3] Cf. *Didache*, c. 10 τοῖς δὲ προφήταις ἐπιτρέπετε εὐχαριστεῖν ὅσα θέλουσιν. Justin, *apol.* i. 67 ὁ προεστὼς εὐχὰς ὁμοίως καὶ εὐχαριστίας, ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ, ἀναπέμπει. The reader may with advantage refer to Bp Lightfoot's remarks in *S. Clement of Rome*, i. p. 382 ff., and to Duchesne, *Christian Worship* (Eng. tr.), p. 50 ff.

[4] Matt. *l.c.* ἐὰν δύο συμφωνήσωσιν ἐξ ὑμῶν.

agreement not of one congregation only, but of all congregations that use the same form. In the case of the Anglican communion the possession of a Book of Common Prayer links together fellow-churchmen in all parts of the globe; we know, as we kneel in our churches at home, that the petitions which we offer are ascending to the Throne of Grace from all the churches of our communion in four continents. Each of the great historical Churches preserves a similar *consensus* in prayer through the use of common forms. The fellowship of common prayer is, however, not to be limited to churches which use liturgical forms. We gladly recognize that it exists essentially among all believers in our Lord, of whatever communion they may be, whether they use forms of prayer, or trust to the discretion of the minister appointed to lead their devotions. The essential things in the fellowship of prayer are the faith which brings men together in Christ's Name, and the oneness of heart and mind which makes them desire the same gifts of grace. In their chief petitions the true disciples of Christ of all Christian communities, and in all ages since the Advent, are substantially agreed.

Akin to this *consensus* in prayer is the fellowship of mutual intercession. No careful reader of St Paul's Epistles will have failed to notice the Apostle's constant reference to the subject of intercessory prayer. To the Romans, whom he had not seen, he

writes: "Unceasingly I make mention of you in my prayers"; to the Ephesians: "I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers"; "I bow my knees unto the Father ... that he would grant you ... that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit"; to the Philippians: "This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more"; to the Colossians: "Since the day we heard it (their love in the Spirit), we do not cease to pray and make request for you"; to the Thessalonians: "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers"; "we pray always for you, that our God may count you worthy of your calling."[1] On his own part St Paul desired the prayers of the churches.[2] Nor was this interchange of prayer and thanksgiving to be restricted to persons so closely connected as an Apostle and his converts: "Watching thereunto (he writes to the Ephesians) in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints."[3] Even St James, in many respects the antithesis to St Paul, the stern advocate of practical religion, does not lose sight of the duty of mutual intercession: "confess your sins (he says) one to another, and pray for one another,

[1] Rom. i. 10; Eph. i. 16, iii. 14 ff.; Phil. i. 9; Col. i. 9; 1 Thess. i. 2; 2 Thess. i. 12.

[2] Cf. *e.g.* Eph. vi. 19.

[3] Eph. vi. 18. On "fellowship in intercession" see Westcott, *Incarnation in Common Life*, p. 4 ff.

that ye may be healed."[1] Intercession, indeed, is not to be made for fellow-Christians only; since God "willeth that all men should be saved," and Christ, "Himself man, is mediator between God and men," and "gave Himself a ransom for all," it is right that "supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all men."[2] But in such intercessions there is no fellowship, for those for whom we pray do not and perhaps cannot reciprocate our prayers. On the other hand, when we pray or give thanks for the saints, we may be assured that the saints on their part pray and give thanks for us, if not by name, at least as members of the great brotherhood of the Catholic Church.

The Church has always interceded both for the world, and more especially for those who (in St Paul's words) are "our friends in faith."[3] The earliest Christian letter outside the canon of the New Testament, the Epistle of Clement of Rome, ends with devotions in which Bishop Lightfoot recognized reminiscences of the weekly Eucharistic prayer.[4] A great part of this form is taken up with intercessions, among which are the following prayers for the members of the Church: "Save those among us who are in tribulation; have mercy on those of

[1] James v. 16. [2] 1 Tim. ii. 1 ff.

[3] Tit. iii. 15 *τοὺς φιλοῦντας ἡμᾶς ἐν πίστει.*

[4] Clem. R. 1 Cor. 59 ff.; cf. Lightfoot, *S. Clement of Rome*, i. p. 385 ff.

low estate, lift up the fallen, shew Thyself to the needy, conduct the wanderers of Thy people; feed the hungry, release our prisoners, raise up the weak, comfort the feeble-hearted." In the middle of the fourth century a fairly complete liturgy comes to us from an Egyptian diocese;[1] a few sentences will shew how powerfully the spirit of intercession moved the Church of Athanasius in those strenuous days of conflict with Arianism. Here is part of his friend Sarapion's Prayer for the Church: "We beseech Thee for all in this church; be reconciled to all, pardon all, grant to all remission of sins, give them grace to sin no more. Be Thou their wall of defence, and bring to nought every temptation; have mercy on men and women and little children, and manifest Thyself to all, and let the knowledge of Thee be written in their hearts." A Prayer for the People similarly begs: "Receive us, God of truth, receive this people; grant them all to prove themselves sincere, to live blamelessly and in purity; let them attain to the measure of the heavenly, be numbered with the angels, and be all found elect and holy." With a wider outlook the liturgy of the *Apostolical Constitutions*,[2]

[1] In a service-book attributed to Sarapion, Bishop of Thmuis in the Delta, a contemporary and friend of Athanasius. It may be read in *J.T.S.* i. pp. 88 ff., 247 ff., or in an English version by Bp John Wordsworth, published by S.P.C.K.

[2] The Greek text may be seen in Brightman's *Liturgies, Eastern and Western*, vol. i. p. 3 ff.

also a work of the fourth century, but from the neighbourhood of Antioch, bids, "Let us pray for every Christian soul," and later in the office continues: "We pray thee, O Lord, for Thy holy Catholic Church from one end of the earth to the other, which Thou hast purchased with the precious blood of Thy Christ, that Thou wouldst keep her unshaken and unmoved to the consummation of the world," with much more to the same effect. Every ancient liturgy has its intercession for the sick, the sorrowful, and the tempted members of Christ's Body: so careful was the Church of the early centuries to use the great service of the Eucharist as an opportunity for united intercessory prayer. The English Order of Holy Communion, although since 1552 it departs widely from the ancient liturgies in regard to the scheme of the canon, and has abandoned certain features to which they gave prominence, accepts this principle, placing a prayer for the Church militant in the forefront of the office. And the English Litany, and the Prayer for all conditions of men, provided for use when the Litany is not appointed to be said, carry the note of intercession into our daily services when they are said at morning and evening prayer.

It is not, however, only in common prayer that the communion of saints is manifested. It is shewn not less clearly in the fellowship of Christian work.

Such work may take the form of great efforts in which the churches or the members of a particular church unite. In the life of St Paul few incidents are more striking than his enthusiastic pursuit of a scheme for supplying the wants of "the poor among the saints at Jerusalem"[1] by contributions from the churches he had founded among the Gentiles. His epistles to Corinth and Rome shew how, in the midst of incessant evangelistic labour, and burdened by the care of all the churches, the Apostle carried out this work, risking his life and losing his liberty in the visit to Jerusalem which he undertook for the purpose of handing over the gift to the mother church. Doubtless he was moved by compassion for the poverty of the Christian Jews. But he had other and deeper reasons, as he himself has told us: "the ministration of this service not only filleth up the measure of the wants of the saints, but aboundeth also through many thanksgivings unto God; seeing that ... they—the saints at Jerusalem—glorify God ... for the liberality of your contributions unto them and unto all, while they themselves also, with supplication on your behalf, long after you, by reason of the exceeding grace of God in you."[2] The words shew how communion between churches in different localities, and consisting of men of different races,

[1] Rom. xv. 26 *τοὺς πτωχοὺς τῶν ἁγίων.*

[2] See Rom. xv. 25 ff.; 1 Cor. xvi. 1; 2 Cor. viii., ix.

may be promoted by brotherly help in time of need, the material gift calling forth thanksgivings to God, prayer for the benefactors, and warm affection towards them. St Paul may have hoped that even greater things might follow from the offering sent by Gentile Christendom to the relief of the Jerusalem church: that it would put an end to friction between the two divisions of Christ's army, and make Jew and Gentile realize their oneness in Him. If the effort did not yield at Jerusalem all the good he had looked for, its effect on the contributors themselves could only have been good: those who sowed bountifully reaped bountifully in the increase of faith and hope and love.[1]

It was, indeed, one of the fundamental principles of St Paul's Christian ethic, that the wealthy members of the Church must be "ready to distribute, willing to communicate."[2] There must be 'communication' both in things spiritual and in the good things of the present life; those who had the blessings of the Gospel and the Church were bound to extend them to those who had them not;[3] those who were rich in this world must "remember the poor."[4] The taught were required to impart to their teachers the means

[1] 2 Cor. ix. 6.

[2] 1 Tim. vi. 17 f. *τοῖς πλουσίοις . . . παράγγελλε . . . εὐμεταδότους εἶναι, κοινωνικούς.*

[3] Cf. Rom. xv. 27 *τοῖς πνευματικοῖς αὐτῶν ἐκοινώνησαν τὰ ἔθνη.*

[4] Gal. ii. 9.

of subsistence, in return for the saving knowledge received from them. Hospitality to strangers, especially to such as were brethren in Christ, is constantly inculcated: "Let love of the brethren continue"; "forget not to shew love unto strangers"; "using hospitality one to another without murmuring."[1] St Peter adds: "As every man hath received a gift, ministering it among yourselves, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God";[2] where, as the context shews, he is thinking not of material gifts only but of those which are intellectual and spiritual, such as powers of conversation or of public teaching. No gift has been bestowed on any member of the Church solely for his own use or pleasure: all we have is held in trust for the service of our brethren. To act on this principle is to realize, in our own measure, the practical meaning of the communion of Saints.

Sympathy must go with brotherly action. There is a way of saying, "Be ye warmed and clothed,"[3] which, though food and clothing are supplied, is far

[1] Heb. xiii. 1 ff.

[2] 1 Pet. iv. 9 f. On Christian φιλοξενία see also Rom. xii. 13; 1 Tim. iii. 2; and for instances in the Apostolic age cf. Rom. xvi. 23: Γαΐος ὁ ξένος μου καὶ ὅλης τῆς ἐκκλησίας: 3 John 5 ff. προπέμψας ἀξίως τοῦ θεοῦ. The 'send off' of Christian travellers, sometimes with such assistance as they needed for their journey, was, in the circumstances of the primitive Church, an important and valuable form of φιλοξενία; see Acts xv. 3; Rom. xv. 24; 1 Cor. xvi. 11; Tit. iii. 13.

[3] James ii. 15 f.

from conducing to Christian fellowship. There is no real fellowship where sympathy is wanting; the first condition of corporate unity is absent. In a living body "whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it."[1] Our common human nature teaches us to "rejoice with them that rejoice" and "weep with those that weep";[2] our common faith intensifies this natural sympathy when the objects of it are our brethren in Christ.

The Christians of the age of persecution had opportunities of shewing their sympathy with those who suffered for the sake of Christ such as are not often given in these days. "After ye were enlightened," the writer to the Hebrews reminds his first readers, "ye endured a great conflict of sufferings; partly, being made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly, becoming partakers with them that were so used; for ye both had compassion on them that were in bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your possessions."[3] Those who shewed sympathy with the prisoners ran the risk of sharing their shame and losses; but this danger did not deter the new converts from fellowship with their brothers who were suffering for the faith.

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 26. [2] Rom. xii. 15.

[3] Heb. x. 33 f. *τοῦτο δέ, κοινωνοὶ τῶν οὕτως ἀναστρεφομένων γενηθέντες· καὶ γὰρ τοῖς δεσμίοις συνεπαθήσατε.*

But the sympathy which knits Christians together in the communion of Saints does not need the stimulus of persecution or of some great disaster to call it forth. It is something deeper and greater than the words or acts by which it expresses itself when occasion arises. It is the drawing together of hearts that burn with the same fire of love.[1] Those who "love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption" find themselves, in the most essential things of life and thought, one with all others who love Him thus. Differences of race and class and sex, and even of ecclesiastical order, vanish in the presence of this deepest bond of fellowship. "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus."[2]

[1] Cf. Col. ii. 2 *συνβιβασθέντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ*. For *συνβιβάζειν* cf. Col. ii. 19; Eph. iv. 16.

[2] Gal. iii. 28 *πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἷς ἐστέ*.

IV

THE COMMUNION OF LIVING SAINTS WITH THE DEPARTED

So far we have considered only the fellowship which exists between members of the Church militant here in earth. But the slightest reflexion will shew that the communion of saints must embrace a far larger area. Spiritual fellowship based upon union with God in Christ cannot be terminated by physical death. If "I am persuaded that neither death nor life . . . shall be able to separate us from the love of God,"[1] it is reasonable to believe also that the accident of death cannot separate us from fellowship with those who have gone before.[2]

1. It is clear, however, that if the living still have fellowship with the dead, it must be carried on under conditions widely different from those which attend fellowship with the living. Neither sight nor hearing

[1] Rom. viii. 38 f.

[2] Unless death is followed by a suspension of consciousness; on this see p. 215.

assist communion with the departed, and the vast majority of them are absolutely unknown to us even by name. "There be of them that have left a name behind them," but "those which have no memorial"[1] are incomparably more numerous. Such obstacles to communion, however, are not insuperable; we know ourselves to be in communion with tens of thousands of living saints who are equally unknown to us. A common faith and hope and love, common sacraments, a common aim in life, the possession of the same Spirit of grace, membership in the same Divine family, draw together Christian people in every part of the globe; and this experience encourages the hope that communion with the departed is not hindered by the mere fact that they are beyond sight and hearing, and that even their names, except in the case of a few relations and friends or of the greater Saints, are wholly unknown. A more serious obstacle to fellowship with the dead lies in our ignorance of the conditions under which they live. We cannot realize the order into which they have passed; it is beyond our cognizance, and very little has been revealed to us about their state, beyond the fact that they exist, are conscious, and are with Christ.

The New Testament is singularly reticent with regard to the condition of the faithful departed. God,

[1] Sirach xliv. 8 f.

we know, is "not the God of the dead, but of the living"; "all," whether alive or dead to men, "live unto him."[1] The parable of the Rich Man and the Beggar represents the spirits of the righteous as reposing in "Abraham's bosom," *i.e.* seated at a spiritual banquet next to the father of the faithful;[2] the Lord's answer to the penitent robber designates this place of rest "the paradise," the New Eden, or spiritual garden of delight.[3] Quite in accordance with these hints in the Gospel is St Paul's judgement that to "depart and to be with Christ" is "very far better"[4] than to live here; and the Apocalyptic voice from heaven, "Write: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours."[5] St Paul's view of the state of the faithful departed may be learnt more fully from 2 Cor. v. 1-10—a passage which, however, is not free from difficulty. The Apostle speaks, as perhaps he was compelled to speak of such a subject, in figurative language: the present body is "the earthly house of this tabernacle," while the future spiritual body is "our habitation which is from heaven"; and he clings to the hope that there may be no interval between the putting

[1] Luke xx. 38. [2] Luke xvi. 22 f.; cf. John xiii. 23.

[3] Luke xxiii. 43 *ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ*. Cf. 2 Cor. xii. 4 *ἡρπάγη εἰς τὸν παράδεισον*: Apoc. ii. 7 *ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ τοῦ θεοῦ*.

[4] Phil. i. 23 *πολλῷ μᾶλλον κρεῖσσον*. [5] Apoc. xiv. 13.

off of the one and the putting on of the other, no period of disembodied nakedness;[1] better, if so it might be, that the spiritual body should be superimposed on the body of this flesh, that this mortal should be swallowed up by the life to be revealed at the Coming of the Lord. But what if death should come to us before the Parousia, and strip us of the flesh before its place can be taken by the incorruptible? Even in that case our confidence in Christ will not have been misplaced. For death will bring us nearer to Him. Here we are in exile, there we shall be at home. At home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; absent from the body, we shall be with Him. And of the two states we prefer the latter; better to be with Christ in the nakedness of the disembodied spirit than to be in the body, but away from Christ.[2]

"With the Lord," although not as yet in the completeness of human nature. This is the furthest point to which the New Testament carries its revelations of the state of the dead in Christ. Apostolic thought preferred to dwell on the glorious end which the first generation of Christians regarded as imminent; it was not before the third or fourth generation, when the ever-growing number of the Christian dead already

[1] 2 Cor. v. 3 *εἴ γε καὶ ἐνδυσάμενοι οὐ γυμνοὶ εὑρεθησόμεθα.*

[2] *Ibid.* v. 8 *εὐδοκοῦμεν μᾶλλον ἐκδημῆσαι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος καὶ ἐνδημῆσαι πρὸς τὸν κύριον.*

formed a clear majority of the Church, that the problem of the condition of the departed forced itself on the thought of Christendom. Were the spirits of believers received at death into heaven? or did they await the resurrection in an intermediate state? This was the first question that demanded an answer; and the answer was given by the Church of the second century with no uncertain voice. An immediate reception into heaven seemed to carry with it the abandonment of belief in the Resurrection of the body,[1] and it gave to the disciple an advantage which the Master had not claimed; for did not Christ Himself descend into Hades before He ascended into heaven?[2] Catholic Christians, therefore, from the time of Justin and Irenaeus thought of the souls of the departed as in an expectant attitude which was neither heaven nor hell; but while all awaited the final judgement, the godly awaited it in a better place, and the unrighteous in a worse. "Souls," so Irenaeus teaches, "depart at death into the place appointed for them of God, and there they abide until the Resurrection, when they will take again their bodies, and rise in the completeness of their nature, as the Lord rose; and so they will come to the sight of God."[3] In Tertullian, who already shews the Latin tendency to stiffen and crystallize beliefs which were still fluid,

[1] Justin, *dial.* 80. [2] Irenaeus, *haer.* v. 31. 1 f.
[3] Irenaeus, *l.c.*

we arrive at the definite statement that "heaven is open to none, while the earth still stands—not to say while it is still shut down upon us; with the passing away of the world the kingdom of heaven will be thrown open."[1]

But if there be an intermediate state (or 'place,' as the early writers usually speak), what is the condition of souls while they are there? This question also Tertullian essays to answer quite definitely in his treatise *On the Soul.* "Shall we sleep away our time there? No; sleep is a state into which the body falls, but not the soul. Even in life the soul can be active while the body is at rest, can suffer when the body feels no pain, and rejoice while the body suffers. So in the state of the dead; the soul may be in pain or in joy apart from the body. Hence there is no reason to doubt that future rewards and punishments may begin in the intermediate life though it remains for the risen life to experience them in their fulness."[2] In another book Tertullian adds: "The place of the dead is divided, as in the parable, into two regions remote from one another, Hades and Abraham's Bosom. Abraham's Bosom, the abode of the saintly dead, is not Heaven, but it

[1] Tertullian, *de anima* 55 "nulli patet caelum terra adhuc salva, ne dixerim clausa; cum transactione enim mundi reserabuntur regna caelorum."

[2] Tert. *op. cit.* 58.

is far above Hades, an intermediate place of refreshment for the spirits of the righteous."[1] To the martyrs Tertullian seems to assign a position of greater nearness to Christ, which he calls Paradise, and identifies with the place "under the altar," where St John saw the souls of those who had died for their faith. He has the hardihood to limit to the martyrs St Paul's utterance on the state of all who die in the Lord: "None when he leaves the body is at once 'at home with the Lord,' unless he enjoys the martyr's privilege."[2]

The Alexandrians both modified and amplified these views. A further question presented itself to their acuter minds. Could it be thought that all the Christian dead enjoy, or enjoy at once, the rest and refreshment of Abraham's Bosom? Must it not be supposed that for many believers, or rather for the majority of them, some further discipline is necessary before they can enter into the joy of the Lord? Must not the life after death be for most Christians one of progress rather than of perfection? "A believer," writes Clement of Alexandria, "even after he has left the world, still has to put off his passions, that he may be able to enter the mansion prepared for him. When through much discipline this has been effected, he passes into a mansion which is better than his first abode, his chief

[1] Tert. *adv. Marc.* iv. 34. [2] Tert. *de resur. carnis*, 43.

punishment there being the special penitence which he must undergo for sins committed after Baptism."[1] In another place Clement speaks of this penitence as a fire, which, however, he is careful to add, is not a material flame; "the Christian teaching is that the ... fire sanctifies sinful souls, understanding by 'fire' not the all-devouring flame of common life, but the discerning flame which passes through the soul that walks through fire."[2] Origen also speaks of a fire which follows death, and extends it to all, not excluding the very chiefest Apostles, who will, however, pass through it unscathed.[3] "My view (he writes) is that the saints, on departing this life, will have their abode in some place within the earth which Holy Scripture calls Paradise, as in a place of higher education or, if I may so say, a lecture room or school of souls,[4] wherein they will receive instruction on all things that they saw upon earth, and also gain some hints as to things that are to follow, and the future, just as in the present life partial instructions as to the future were conveyed to them through a mirror and in riddles; these are now more

[1] Clem. Al. *strom.* vi. 14 (109).

[2] Clem. Al. *strom.* vii. 6 (34) *πῦρ οὐ τὸ πάμφαγον καὶ βάναυσον, ἀλλὰ τὸ φρόνιμον λέγοντες, τὸ διϊκνούμενον διὰ ψυχῆς τῆς διερχομένης τὸ πῦρ.* I quote from Mayor and Hort's translation.

[3] Orig. *hom. in Ps.* xxxii. (iii. 1).

[4] "velut in quodam eruditionis loco et, ut ita dixerim, auditorio vel schola animarum."

plainly and clearly revealed to the saints in places and at seasons proper for that purpose." He adds the interesting suggestion that "if any one is pure in heart, and purer in mind and of more practised insight" than his brethren, and so makes a more speedy advance than they, he will mount up quickly to the region of the upper air, and reach the celestial realms, passing through the several halting places, which are called by the Greeks 'spheres,' and in Holy Scripture are known as 'the heavens'; and at each of these stages in his journey he will acquire fresh knowledge, learning to see, in the first heaven, what passes in that world, and, in the second, the reason for them; and thus he will make his way through each of the spheres in order, following the steps of Him Who "passed through the heavens," even Jesus the Son of God.[1]

Origen's contemporary, Hippolytus, describes the state of the dead with a minuteness which approaches to the graphic touch of an apocalyptist.[2] "Hades," he writes, "is a region underground, on which the light of the world shines not.... It is assigned to souls as a place of custody, over which are set angel guards. The righteous are kept in Hades for the present, but not in the same place as the unrighteous; they are brought to a bright region where from the

[1] Orig. *de princ.* ii. 11. 6.

[2] See Lagarde, *Hippolyti quae feruntur*, p. 68 f.

first the just have had their dwelling, and where they ever enjoy the sight of the good things before their eyes, and delight in the expectation of the new wonders that from time to time are coming into sight, of which the last are always greater than those that have gone before. To these souls this place brings no fatigue, no scorching heat, no frost; no thirst is to be found in it. They see the faces of their fathers in the faith and the righteous ever smiling upon them, as they await the rest which is to follow and their endless resurrection-life in heaven. To this region we give the name of Abraham's Bosom."

Thus, with much variety of detail, the great Christian teachers of the second and third centuries were generally agreed in regarding the dead in Christ as expecting the Resurrection in a state intermediate between earth and heaven, receiving already in part the reward of their faith, but looking for its completion at the Coming of the Lord. Some of these writers add that Christian souls meanwhile undergo discipline if discipline is necessary, or carry on their education for the higher life, receiving additions to their knowledge; and as their nature grows and ripens under this process, rising to greater heights, and drawing nearer to the fulness of their joy. If some of these early teachers of the Church represented the discipline of souls under the image of fire,

it was not the fire of penal suffering[1] to which the figure pointed, but the refining fire of the Spirit, who would thus continue and complete in the saints the work of purification which He had begun on earth.

2. Prayer is our chief means of fellowship with fellow-Christians who are separated from us by long distances. Our brethren in other lands across the sea pray for us, and we for them; and this interchange of prayer is a bond which links together the members of Christ throughout the world.

If death does not involve a suspension of conscious life, there seems to be no reason why this kind of fellowship should not exist between the living and the departed. It is natural to suppose that departed Saints remember in their prayers those whom they knew on earth, and that those who are still on earth can return the benefit.

The belief that the departed pray for their brethren on earth found a place among the Jews of the Maccabean age. In 2 Maccabees Onias is seen with outstretched hands invoking blessings on the Jewish nation; and the prophet Jeremiah is represented as a "lover of the brethren, who prayeth much for the

[1] Cf. Dr. Mason's *Purgatory*, pp. 1-57, for a sketch of the growth of the mediaeval doctrine of an *ignis purgatorius*. I am indebted to the same work for several of the references given above.

people of the Holy City."[1] The New Testament has no exact counterpart, but the prophet of the Apocalypse sees the souls of the martyrs interceding with God for the speedy punishment of the persecutors of the Church.[2] In the ancient Church it was a widespread opinion, if not an article of faith, that the dead in Christ pray for the living. Thus Origen, in his tract *On Prayer*, writes: "Not only does the Great High Priest pray for those who pray sincerely, but they have also the prayers of the Angels, who rejoice over one sinner that repenteth . . . and of the souls of the Saints who have fallen asleep."[3] Elsewhere he says that 'all the friends of God, angels and souls and spirits, favour those who are worthy, and co-operate with those who wish to serve God, and pray with them and share their petitions; insomuch that we may dare to say that thousands of holy powers, without being bidden, join in the prayers of those who choose the better part.'[4] And again: "It will not be wrong to say that all departed saints, retaining their love for those who are still alive, care for their salvation, and help them by their prayers and intercessions."[5] Indeed, so often does Origen

[1] 2 Macc. xv. 12 ff. [2] Apoc. vi. 9 ff.

[3] Orig. *de orat.* 11 οὐ μόνος ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς . . . συνεύχεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ . . . αἱ τῶν προκεκοιμημένων ψυχαί.

[4] Orig. *adv. Cels.* viii. 64 μυρίαι ὅσαι ἄκλητοι συνεύχονται δυνάμεις.

[5] Orig. *in cant. canticorum*, 3.

insist on this point[1] that he may be believed to have found in it one of the chief consolations of his laborious and suffering life. There is a touching letter addressed by Cyprian to Cornelius, Bishop of Rome, at a time when both were expecting martyrdom, in which Cyprian pleads: "If one of us goes before the other, let our love for one another be unbroken, when we are with the Lord; let our prayers for our brethren and sisters be unceasing."[2] A century and a half later, Jerome, writing against Vigilantius, argues: "If the Apostles and martyrs, while still in the body, were able to pray for one another, when they still had need to take thought for themselves, how much the more must they be able to do this, now that they are crowned with victory and triumphant? Moses gained forgiveness for 600,000 men; Stephen, the first martyr, begged forgiveness for his murderers. Can their prayers be less effectual, now that they are with Christ?"[3] No belief which was not actually an article of the faith was more general or more deeply cherished in ancient Christendom.

But if departed saints pray for the living, can the living reciprocate their prayers? Are we at liberty

[1] The passages are collected by Kirsch, *Doctrine of the Communion of Saints* (Eng. tr.), pp. 54-66.

[2] Cyprian, *ep.* 60. 5 "si quis istuc nostrum ... praecesserit, perseveret apud dominum nostra dilectio; pro fratribus et sororibus nostris apud misericordiam patris non cesset oratio."

[3] Jerome, *adv. Vigilant.* 7.

to remember the dead before God, as the dead, we believe, remember the living? Can there be between us the fellowship of reciprocal prayer?

The Biblical evidence is slight. According to 2 Maccabees, Judas Maccabaeus provided for the offering of sacrifices for the good estate of the souls of certain Jews who had fallen in battle fighting for their country, but in life had been guilty of idolatrous practices. "Therein," the writer contends, "Judas did right well and honourably, in that he took thought for a resurrection; for if he had not expected that those who had fallen would rise again, it would have been superfluous and idle to pray for the dead."[1] The New Testament contains but one petition for a departed saint, but it is a prayer for his acceptance in the day of Christ, and not for his well-being in the intermediate life.[2] The sub-apostolic writings are altogether silent on the subject. But the question whether the prayers of the living avail for the dead is answered with no uncertain voice by Christian antiquity from the end of the second century onwards.

As the condition of the faithful departed presented itself to the thought of the ancient Church, prayer on

[1] 2 Macc. xii. 43 ff. For present Jewish practice, cf. Oesterley and Box, *Synagogue*, p. 340 f.

[2] 2 Tim. i. 18 *δῴη αὐτῷ ὁ κύριος εὑρεῖν ἔλεος παρὰ Κυρίου ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ*. Both the passages in which Onesiphorus is mentioned in this Epistle (i. 18, v. 19) seem to presuppose his death.

their behalf could not be regarded as either useless or superfluous. The departed had "migrated to the Lord," and were with Christ; and so far they were in a state greatly superior to that of their brethren on earth. But they were still, at least in many cases, undergoing spiritual training and discipline, and there was room in their lives, as there is in ours, for progress both intellectual and spiritual, in knowledge and in holiness; they had not yet attained to the perfection of the risen saints. It was felt that they needed our prayers, as we need theirs. And so the living Church did not hesitate to pray for her dead members, asking for them such things as were believed to be most necessary for their present happiness and eternal salvation.

Instances of prayer for the faithful departed occur early in the West. At Rome the catacombs offer numerous examples of inscriptions which invite the prayers of the passers by for the deceased, or in which petitions are directly offered on his behalf.[1] Thus one epitaph entreats any of the brethren who read it to ask God to 'take to Himself this pure and innocent soul.' "Remember dear Agatha," another begs, "that Almighty God may keep her for ever."

[1] See Marucchi, *Christian Epigraphy* (Eng. tr.), p. 156. Cf. the epitaph written for his own tomb by Avircius of Hierapolis, in which he begs, Ταῦθ' ὁ νοῶν εὔξαιθ' ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ πᾶς ὁ συνῳδός.

Others run: "Jesus, Lord, remember our child"; "God refresh thy spirit"; "in peace be thy spirit." These are the simple, unreproved outpourings of Christian hearts, of bereaved husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, among the Roman laity of the second and third centuries. If we pass from Rome to Carthage, we learn from Tertullian what the official Church was doing about the same time. Between death and burial the presbyter was called in to pray for the departed soul.[1] Year by year on the anniversary of death the Eucharist was offered for the deceased.[2] In Tertullian's judgement it is an argument against second marriages that the widower must remember in prayer and Eucharist the dead wife as well as the living, and thus "stands before the Lord with as many wives as he prays or offers for."[3] The offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice for the dead is a feature of Christian life which frequently appears in the letters of Cyprian.[4] Whether the intercession for the dead had in his time become a part of the canon of the mass is not so certain; but early in the fourth century Arnobius speaks of such intercessions as

[1] Tert. *de anima*, 51.

[2] Tert. *de coron.* 3 "oblationes pro defunctis, pro natalitiis, annua die facimus."

[3] Tert. *de exh. cast.* 51; *de monog.* 10.

[4] See *Studia Biblica*, iv. 284 f.

already holding a fixed place in the public worship of the Western Church.[1]

As to the form of the Eucharistic intercession for the dead, we have no evidence earlier than the middle years of the fourth century. At the Easter of 348 Cyril of Jerusalem gave the newly baptized a lecture on the Eucharist, in which he says: "We remember also those that have fallen asleep in times past, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, that through their prayers and intercessions God may accept our supplications. Then we pray also for the holy fathers and bishops and for all who before our times have fallen asleep, believing that the greatest service will be rendered to the souls for which supplication is offered in the presence of the holy and aweful Sacrifice."[2] An Egyptian contemporary of Cyril, Sarapion of Thmuis, has left us the actual words prescribed, as it seems, for use in his diocese: after the reading of a list of names, the priest says: "Sanctify these souls, for thou knowest all souls; sanctify all souls that rest in the Lord, and number them with all Thy holy powers, and give them a place and mansion in Thy kingdom." Another

[1] Arnobius, *adv. nat.* iv. 36 "in quibus [conventiculis] . . . pax cunctis et venia postulatur, adhuc vitam degentibus et resolutis corporum vinctione." At Rome the *memento etiam* formed no part of the fixed canon till a later date (Srawley, *Early History of the Liturgy*, pp. 184, 212).

[2] Cyril. Hieros. *catech. myst.* v. 9.

fourth century form, that of the *Apostolical Constitutions*, runs: "We offer to Thee on behalf of all who have pleased Thee well, since the world began: holy patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, bishops, priests, deacons ... laymen, and all whose names Thou knowest."[1]

It will be observed that the tone of these early forms is singularly reserved; there is nothing in them that corresponds to the bold flights of Tertullian, Clement, and Origen. The early Church, in her official utterances, was content to commend her dead to God, in whose sight they were still alive; if she asked for them any particular gift, it was simply peace or refreshment, or growth in knowledge or in holiness. The later Greek liturgies are somewhat more explicit, but still keep clear of the dangers of over-specification. Thus the liturgy of St James prays: "Refresh them Thyself in the land of the living, in Thy Kingdom, in the luxury of Paradise, in the Bosom of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whence pain and grief and sighing have fled away; where the light of Thy countenance visits them and shines for evermore."[2] Similarly the liturgy of St Mark: "Refresh them in the habitation of Thy saints, granting them the good things that Thou hast promised, which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, ...

[1] Ed. Brightman in *J.T.S.* i. p. 106.

[2] Brightman, *Liturgies, Eastern and Western*, i. p. 57.

and count them worthy of the kingdom of heaven."[1] The Roman *Memento etiam*, it has been pointed out, is not part of the early Roman canon; yet its reserve is worthy of the best age: "Remember also, O Lord, Thy servants, men and women, who have gone before us with the seal of faith and sleep of peace. Grant, Lord, we pray Thee, to these and to all who rest in Christ a place of refreshment, light, and peace."[2]

In these Eucharistic prayers for the dead there is nothing to favour the idea which began to possess the Western Church from the time of Augustine, that penal suffering awaits the great majority of Christians in the intermediate state. The word "refreshment" (*refrigerium*), which occurs both in epitaphs and in liturgical prayers of an early date, means no more than rest from earthly toil and suffering, or the revival of the spiritual life which follows departure; or at most, relaxation of the discipline which may be necessary in the case of those who before death have advanced but a little way in the life of God.[3] Purgatorial fire in the later sense is not in view even in liturgies which in their

[1] *L.E.W.* i. p. 129.

[2] *Missale Romanum* of 1474, ed. Lippe, i. p. 208.

[3] Cf. Rönsch, *Itala u. Vulgata*, pp. 33, 321 f.; for the use of *refrigerium* in the Vulgate see esp. Ps. lxv. 12; Acts iii. 19 (ἀναψυχή, ἀνάψυξις); Wisdom iv. 7 (ἀνάπαυσις).

present form must be much later than the fourth century.

The Church of England at the Reformation was slow to abandon the public use of prayers for the departed. The *Bishops' Book*, while warning the people of England against the "abuses which under the name of purgatory have been advanced," says that "it standeth with the very due order of charity that Christian men should pray for the souls departed, and commit them in our prayers to God's mercy"; and the *King's Book* follows the same train of thought.[1] Nor does Cranmer seem to have entertained any doubt upon the subject so late as 1549, when the first English *Order of Holy Communion* contained a commendation of the departed to the mercy of God based upon the *Memento* of the Roman and Sarum canon. Yet in the Second Book of 1552 all prayers for the faithful departed disappeared.[2] Between 1549 and 1552 Bucer's *Censura* had condemned prayers for the dead, chiefly on the ground that "when prayer is made for the departed that God will grant them His mercy and eternal peace, the vulgar, without exception, think it to mean that the departed still want that peace." It is difficult to disconnect Cranmer's

[1] *Formularies of Faith* (Oxf. 1856), pp. 210 f., 375 f.

[2] In 1662 prayer for the departed reappeared in the very modified form "that with them we may be partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom."

change of front in this matter from the counsel of this foreign divine;[1] but whether through Bucer's influence or not, the fact remains that the ancient prayers for the dead vanished from the English Prayerbook in 1552. An attempt was made in the same year to condemn the practice in the *Articles of Religion*, but the words were struck out of the draft before it was accepted by Convocation, and they have never been restored. It is thus left open to members of the English Church to exercise their discretion in this matter at their private devotions at home or in Church, and there is evidence that this liberty has been used by some of the wisest and best sons of the Church from the beginning of the seventeenth century onwards.[2] At the present day it is used by a large minority, or perhaps even a majority of well-instructed Churchmen, who at the same time loyally acquiesce in the exclusion of prayers for the departed from the authorized forms of public worship until such time as it shall please God to restore them to us.

3. A further question arises in connexion with the communion of the living with the dead in the Church of Christ. If the Saints in Paradise intercede for their brethren on earth, may not the Church

[1] Cf. Dowden, *Workmanship of the Prayerbook*, p. 42.
[2] See Wickham Legg, *English Church Life*, p. 315 ff.

on earth ask the prayers of those who are with the Lord?

On this point Scripture is altogether silent, unless the appeal in *Benedicite* to the "spirits and souls of the righteous"[1] is to be regarded as a true invocation. But the invocation in this case is not a request for prayer, and *Benedicite* does not belong to the Hebrew canon. Early Christian literature is also silent; there is no reference to the practice in Justin, Irenaeus, or Tertullian, or in any writer before Origen; and Origen's witness is at least ambiguous.[2] The catacombs, it is true, supply epitaphs in which the prayers of departed relatives and friends are desired; such words as "pray for thy brothers and comrades," "pray for thy parents ... for thy children ... for the pardon of our sins," are not uncommon.[3] They express the natural and innocent desire of simple people to be remembered in the prayers of their nearest and dearest, whom they believed to be with Christ. If "the supplication of a righteous man availeth much,"[4] and his intercession may be

[1] Dan. iii. 86 (LXX)—a passage where sun and moon, cold and heat, the birds of the air and the fishes of the sea, are similarly invoked.

[2] In his tract on Prayer (xiv. 6) Origen claims that supplications may be addressed to saints such as Peter and John for their help; but there is nothing to show that he is thinking of the departed. His phrase ἄκλητοι συνεύχονται (see above, p. 221) does not encourage this view.

[3] See Marucchi, *Christian Epigraphy* (Eng. tr.), p. 151 ff.; Cabrol, *Dictionnaire*, iii. 2, col. 2452 ff.

[4] James v. 16.

asked while he is still on earth, there is no *prima facie* reason why those who believe their departed friends to be within reach of their words should not desire the prayers of those who are with the Lord.

Nor is it easy to see why objection should be taken to petitions addressed to God that He will be pleased to hear the prayers of the saints at rest for those who are still in the flesh. Such petitions, as we learn from Cyril, had a place in the liturgy of Jerusalem before the middle of the fourth century: "We remember," he tells his neophytes in a passage already quoted, "those who have fallen asleep, that God may through their prayers and intercession receive our supplication."[1] There is much of this kind in the ancient service books, both of East and West; and though such petitions may appear to us to occupy too large a space in the unreformed offices, they do not seem to be wrong in principle. Less can be said for the rhetorical appeals to the dead which are found in the homilies of the great Greek preachers of the second half of the fourth century. When (*e.g.*) Gregory of Nazianzus implores Cyprian to look upon him with favour, to direct his words and his life, and to grant him a fuller understanding of the mystery of the Holy Trinity,[2] we feel that,

[1] Cyril. Hieros. *catech. myst.* v. 9 ὅπως ὁ θεὸς ταῖς εὐχαῖς αὐτῶν καὶ πρεσβείαις προσδέξηται ἡμῶν τὴν δέησιν.

[2] Gregory Naz. *or.* xxiv. *ad fin.*

apart from the questionable taste of such words, they approach dangerously near to a superstitious cult of a departed saint.

Such a cult was, in fact, overtaking the Church in the fourth century. The martyrs had begun to receive undue honour. An early and simple piety made the tombs of the martyrs, almost from the first, places of resort for devout Christians; and at their *memoriae*, as the tombs were called, the Eucharist was celebrated on the martyrs' *natalitia*,[1] the days of their birth by martyrdom into the higher life. When the last persecution was over, the martyrs, to whose ranks no additions could henceforth be made, were regarded with growing veneration, and special efficacy was attributed to their intercession. Even the greatest leaders of the Church did not hesitate to impress upon men's minds the necessity of seeking aid from those who had died for their faith. "When you see that you are under Divine punishment (Chrysostom urges), flee to those friends of God, the martyrs."[2] In the West Ambrose pleads: "Let us not blush to use the martyrs as intercessors for our frailty, for they know what infirmity means, though they have overcome it."[3] "The Church," says

[1] Tert. *de corona*, 3. Cf. the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, 18; Cyprian, *ep.* 39. 3 "martyrum passiones et dies anniversaria commemoratione celebramus."

[2] Chrysostom, *or. adv. Jud.* 8.

[3] Ambrose, *de viduis*, 9.

Augustine, "does not pray for the martyrs, as she does for the rest of the departed, but rather seeks their prayers. Their intercession avails for us because they are with Christ the great Intercessor, and join their prayers to His. Our Lord Jesus Christ intercedes for us; all the martyrs who are with Him intercede for us."[1]

Augustine's mind was too acute to overlook the practical difficulty which is raised by invocation. The martyrs may intercede for us, as Origen says, "unbidden"; but how can we convey to them our desire that they should do so? We have no certain means of communication with the departed. They are, happily for themselves, removed from the sights and sounds of the world, and if it were not so, there is no guarantee that they can hear petitions offered to them, perhaps simultaneously, in every part of the globe. Augustine is driven to the conclusion that the desires of the faithful are communicated to the martyrs and other departed saints either by the ministry of angels, or by the Holy Spirit; but he admits that the problem passes his understanding.[2] From other teachers of the ancient Church more ambitious solutions have come. Jerome supposes that souls which follow the Lamb whither-

[1] Aug. *serm.* clix. 1.

[2] Aug. *enchirid.* 110; *enarr. in Pss.* lxxxv.; *serm.* 280; *de cura pro mortuis*, 16-19.

soever He goes, acquire a kind of ubiquity.[1] Gregory the Great conjectures that saints who have attained to the beatific vision see in the light of God all things that happen in creation; "what is there they know not, since they know Him Who knoweth all things?"[2] This view was adopted by more than one of the great Schoolmen; thus Peter Lombard writes: "It is not incredible that the souls of the saints, in contemplating the Face of God, understand the things that are done in the outer world, so far as such knowledge is necessary to their joy or to our obtaining of their aid."[3] Aquinas draws the conclusion that prayer should be addressed only to saints who are already in heaven; those who are in purgatory do not yet enjoy the vision of God, and therefore are not yet cognizant of the petitions offered to them. This, the logical outcome of Gregory's theory, was also in accordance with the practice which had prevailed throughout the Church for many centuries, of addressing invocations only to the greater saints, of whom it could be said with certainty that they were reigning with Christ in heaven. But the doctrine, as Aquinas states it, has no support either from the New Testament or from

[1] Jerome, *adv. Vigilant.* 6. "si Agnus ubique, ergo et hi qui cum Agno sunt ubique esse credendi sunt"—an amazing logic.

[2] See Dudden, *Gregory the Great*, ii. p. 370.

[3] Peter Lombard, *Sent.* iv. *dist.* 45, 6.

primitive Christianity. That certain of the saints are already in heaven while the rest remain in an intermediate state of purgatorial discipline is no part of the Apostolic tradition, which represents all who die in the Lord as already with Him, not indeed in their final rest, but awaiting it in Paradise.

The theory of Invocation, then, as it was maintained by the great mediaeval divines, rests on unproved assumptions that involve difficulties for which no adequate solution has been found. This is, of course, not fatal to the theory, which may nevertheless be wholly or partly true. We must now retrace our steps, and consider the rise and growth of the practice of Invocation in the public services of the Church.

In Cyril's account of the fourth century liturgy of Jerusalem a distinction is already drawn, as we have seen, between the greater saints and the rest of the departed; for the latter prayer is offered, while the former are simply commemorated in the hope that God may hear their intercessions on behalf of the living. This belief in the 'comprecation' of the living and the departed shews itself in many ancient forms both Eastern and Western, which supplicate the mercy of God on the ground of the prayers and intercessions offered for the suppliants by the Saints, or by the particular Saint who is commemorated at

the time. Thus the Liturgy of St James prays, "Remember, O Lord our God, . . . all thy Saints from the beginning of the world . . . that standing by Thy aweful tribunal they for their part may recall our sad condition, and we may find grace and mercy before Thee, O Lord, for help in time of need."[1] Similarly, in the Roman canon the oblation is offered "for all the Saints . . . that they may deign to intercede for us in heaven," and further on, after mention of the Apostles and certain others of the greater Saints, there comes the prayer that God would grant to their merits and prayers that we may in all things be fortified by the aid of His protecting care.[2] Most of the Western collects for Saints' days are constructed on the same principle, asking the Divine mercy and protection in answer to the prayers of the Saint whose festival is being kept.

So far there is no direct invocation of the Saints who are with God. There seems to be no doubt that invocation in the stricter sense began in the litanies with the simple petition *Ora* (or *orate*) *pro nobis*, repeated by the people after each name or each group of names recited by the priest. The origin of the Western litany has been traced by the greatest of living English liturgical scholars to Constantinople,[3]

[1] Brightman, *L.E.W.* i. p. 57.

[2] *Miss. Rom.* ed. Lippe, i. pp. 201, 207.

[3] Edm. Bishop, *Kyrie eleison*, p. 23.

whence this popular form of devotion came to Rome towards the end of the fifth century. At first the litany consisted solely of the *Kyrie eleison*, varied with *Christe eleison*, and repeated in some instances a hundred times. Later on, perhaps shortly before the eighth century, the monotony of the *Kyrie* was relieved by the introduction of other petitions, followed by the responses *Libera nos Domine*, *Te rogamus*, *Audi nos*, and especially by *Ora pro nobis* said after the name of some great or locally distinguished saint. There is evidence that in England about the middle of the eighth century the names of Gregory the Great and Augustine of Canterbury were thus recited,[1] and a MS. of the early eighth or late seventh century survives in which Gregory is thus invoked.[2]

Ora pro nobis, then, cannot, so far as our present knowledge goes, be traced further back than the last years of the seventh century. Moreover, the litany of the Saints "at first was a private devotion" rather than an official service of the Church. In the earlier litanies the list of the saints invoked was not long; the Stowe missal contains thirteen names; the MS. litany already mentioned, besides Scriptural names, has twenty-eight martyrs and ecclesiastical saints.

[1] Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, iii. p. 368.

[2] See H. F. Stewart, *Doctrina Romanensium*, p. 77 f.; cf. Warren, *Bangor Antiphonary*, ii. p. 89, where this MS. litany is printed.

Later litanies shew a larger number; the Sarum forms give an average of thirty to forty names; of the Primer litanies of Henry VIII.'s reign one has sixty, and another eighty-six.[1]

No form of direct invocation addressed to the departed could in itself be more innocent than the *Ora pro nobis*. There is in the words no worship of the saint addressed—nothing more than a simple request for his prayers. If it does not derogate from the sufficiency of our Lord's intercession to ask the prayers of a living friend, on what principle can a request for the prayers of a departed member of Christ be thought to do so? Two considerations, however, place *Ora* in another light. In the first place, it forms in the litany part of a religious act; the saints are invoked, not indeed in the same terms as God and Christ—there is a marked difference—but in the same act of solemn devotion. When to this we add that the cult of the Saints had by the seventh century acquired a dominating influence in the life of the Church, it is evident that the constant invocation of these patrons and advocates of the living in the most popular of liturgical forms could not have failed to turn the thoughts of the unlearned from the One Mediator and to fix them on a host of secondary intercessors. In these circumstances Archbishop Cranmer is hardly to be blamed for

[1] *Three Primers* (Oxf. 1848), pp. 124 ff., 382 ff.

having in 1549 removed from the English litany the vestiges of the *Ora* which had been left there five years before.[1] The first English Prayerbook, while retaining prayers for the departed, abandoned all invocations except those addressed to the Holy Trinity. Further, the English Articles of 1553, while they left without censure the private use of prayers for the dead, though they had been excluded from the English public services in 1552, explicitly condemned "the doctrine of the school-authors concerning the Invocation of Saints." In 1563 "the doctrine of the school-authors" was changed into "the Romish doctrine" (*doctrina Romanensium*)—a circumstance from which it has been inferred that the revisers of that year withdrew the censure pronounced in 1552 against the scholastic doctrine of Invocation, condemning only the popular Roman teaching of a later date. But a careful investigation of the facts by the late Bishop of Salisbury (Dr. John Wordsworth) seems to have proved that 'Romish' in the 1563 Article means simply 'as accepted and practised in the Roman communion,' and refers, in all probability, to a decree of the Council of Trent passed in 1562, in which the priest is said to implore at mass the patronage of

[1] The English litany of 1544 reduced the invocations to three, addressed severally to St Mary, to the Angels and Archangels, and to the great saints (without specifying any names).

the Saints, that they may vouchsafe to intercede for us in heaven.[1]

It would appear, then, that while the Church of England has left the offering of prayers for the departed optional, so far as regards the private devotions of her members, and has not actually forbidden the indirect invocations based on the doctrine of comprecation, she has since 1563 condemned, root and branch, the practice of directly invoking the Saints. It is, in her judgement, "a fond thing" (*res futilis*), "vainly invented and grounded on no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God" (*imo verbo Dei contradicit*). 'Futile,' because there is no solid ground for the belief that the Saints with Christ can hear our requests; 'repugnant to the Word of God,' since in practice it cannot be reconciled with the Scriptural doctrine of the sole mediation of Christ.

It must be admitted that in coming to this conclusion our Church has departed from the later use both of East and West. But the practice of direct invocation cannot be said to be in the strictest sense Catholic; it does not answer to the Vincentian canon; it has no root in the Apostolic tradition or in the practice of the Ante-Nicene Church; it did not take shape in the liturgical services of Christendom

[1] Bp J. Wordsworth, *Invocation of Saints and the Twenty-Second Article*, p. 36 ff.

until the darkness of the earlier Middle Age had begun to settle down upon Europe. Experience has shewn that it has exerted upon churches in which it has prevailed an influence far from salutary. The simple and comparatively innocuous *Ora* has opened the door to devotions which are practically a return to a form of polytheism. "They say to the Blessed Virgin (writes Bishop Andrewes) not only *Ora pro nobis*, but *Succurre miseris, iuva pusillanimes, refove flebiles, accipe quod offerimus, dona quod rogamus, excusa quod timemus*."[1] It was in vain that the Council of Trent sought to distinguish between prayers offered to the Saints and those offered to God, and to restrain those who exceeded what the theologians held to be the legitimate use of Invocation. The tide of Saint-cultus, and especially of the cult of the Blessed Virgin, has steadily rolled on, until the ancient comprecation and the sober invocations of the litanies are left far behind: "no one (writes Dr. Pusey) can look uncontroversially at ... such books as *The Glories of Mary* or *The Month of Mary* and say that the character of the modern reliance on and invocation of Saints was that of the ancient Church."[2]

No one who realizes the doctrine of the Communion of Saints can doubt that the saints in

[1] Andrewes, in *A.C. Library*, p. 76 ff.

[2] Pusey, *Eirenicon*, p. 112.

Paradise pray for us who are upon earth. To quote Dr. Pusey again, "the intercession of the saints departed and at rest, for us who are still militant, is part of the doctrine of the Communion of Saints, and would be a necessary consequence of God-given love, even if it did not appear from Holy Scripture. The contrary is inconceivable.... Great indeed is the thought of that glorious company in all their different orders, whether, as the blessed Angels, they never fell, or as the Saints, with whom God has been filling up their broken ranks, they, 'secure of their own salvation, are anxious as to our salvation' (Cypr. *de mortal.*). And as the world grows old, and the strife with unbelief becomes more deadly, and perhaps the last conflict is drawing on, year by year the number of those increases who, beholding God, pray for us militant on earth. 'They that be with us are more than they that are against us.' But the truth of the intercession of the inhabitants of Heaven is ... distinct from their invocation. Nay it would, in itself, rather seem to supersede it. For we do not ask any one to do what we are quite sure that he does without our asking."

The intercession of the Saints at rest is a legitimate and necessary consequence of the fellowship in prayer which unites the whole body of Christ. The invocation of departed Saints is a practice based

upon this truth, which is neither primitive nor universal, and which has been found to be dangerous. It is earnestly to be hoped that no false sentiment may lead members of the English Church who realize the need of closer communion with the holy dead to fall back upon so precarious a way of attaining it.

V

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS IN THE LIFE TO COME

HITHERTO we have thought of the Communion of Saints as it exists among members of the Church on earth, or between the living and the dead in Christ. It remains to consider it as it finds a place in the life beyond, in the relations of the departed to the departed, and in the risen life. We begin with the fellowship which departed Saints have one with another in the Church expectant.

1. In one of the finest passages of Plato's great *Apology* Socrates is represented as setting forth alternative views of the condition of the dead.[1] To die, he says, is one of two things: either the dead have ceased to exist and have no perception of anything, or death is simply the passing of the soul from one sphere of being to another. He urges that in either case to die is gain, for in the one it brings the unbroken rest of an eternal night, while in the other

[1] Plato, *apol.* 32 (40 *c*).

it introduces us into a world where we shall find all the dead. And (continues the condemned and dying sage) what greater good can there be than this? Set free from the false judgements of men, to find yourself among the judges who are said to hold assize in that world, Minos and Rhadamanthus, and others who in their lifetime have attained to righteousness; to converse with such men as Orpheus and Musaeus, Hesiod and Homer! For my part (he adds) I would fain die often, if death really brings all this. What a wonderful life it must be where one will meet all the men of old time who have died by unjust sentences! Who would not welcome the opportunity of putting questions to the hero who led the great army to Troy, or to Ulysses or Sisyphus, or thousands of others who can be interrogated there, both men and women? No happiness can be compared with that of conversing with such souls, and associating with them and asking them questions.

A Christian Socrates might draw a yet nobler picture of the fellowship of Christian souls in the world of spirits. What must it be to the faithful to meet and hold converse with patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, saints, whose names are household words in all Christian lands! What joy to the Christian scholar to find himself in fellowship with Clement and Origen, Cyprian and Augustine, Anselm and Bernard, Eckart and Tauler, Hooker and

Andrewes, John Keble and John Henry Newman, to name only a few of the great saintly intellects that have gone before: to learn from them, to hold communion with them, as spirit with spirit, in the sight of the Master of all, in the abode of the just made perfect? Who would not, as Plato has made Socrates say, die many times over, if death brings us all this?

But is such a communion of spirit with spirit possible apart from a bodily organism? We who have never been "out of the body," cannot imagine intercourse without speech, without tongue or hand or brain; nor can we understand how individuals can be even identified when they have no bodily forms to distinguish them. Some early Christian writers sought to meet this difficulty by supposing that the soul retains after death some kind of form which recalls the features of the living man. Irenaeus, reminding himself that Lazarus in the parable recognizes the Rich man, considers that the Lord clearly teaches that the soul preserves some imprint of the body with which it was associated in life.[1] From the same parable Tertullian argues that the sufferings of the Rich man in Hades imply corporeity, since an incorporeal existence cannot feel pain. The soul, he concludes, has a corporeity of its

[1] Iren. *haer.* ii. 34. 1 "characterem corporis in quo etiam adaptantur custodire eundem."

own, distinct from the body it has put off;[1] and he finds support for this view in a vision granted to a Montanist prophetess, who saw a spirit clothed in some sort of body, tender and bright and of the hue of the atmosphere, but retaining the human shape.[2] This idea has not altogether passed from the modern Church; so generally sober a theologian as the Danish Bishop Martensen supposes "some intermediate kind of corporeity in the realm of the dead";[3] and there are those who imagine that the spiritual body of the Resurrection is assumed immediately after death.

Such theories cannot be substantiated, and happily are not necessary to a belief in the fellowship of departed souls. Modern research goes to shew that even between those who are still in the body some kind of communication is possible without the aid of the bodily organism. If there is truth in telepathy, neither speech nor the written word is essential to intercourse between mind and mind. And if this is so on occasions in the case of minds which ordinarily work through the organs of the body, it may well be that disembodied spirits possess means of communication which are entirely independent of the senses.

[1] Tert. *de resur. carnis*, 17; *de anima*, 7. The soul, he says, is in a sense *corporalis*: "habet corpulentiam propriam."

[2] Tert. *de anima*, 9.

[3] Martensen, *Christian Dogmatics* (Eng. tr.), p. 461.

That some means of mutual recognition and fellowship are provided for those who are with the Lord can scarcely be doubted by any one who realizes what the alternative must be—the isolation of each of the dead in Christ from all his brethren who are with him in the same Presence: the suspension through vast intervals of time of that fellowship which, next to union with Christ, is the most fruitful of all the spiritual blessings of our life on earth.

Intercourse then between the blessed dead there surely must be, however it may be brought about: exchanges of high thought and purpose, happy memories and glorious hopes. Nor can we doubt that they have a common worship: a worship not limited, as ours must be, by place and time, or accompanied by the accessories which are needful or expedient in our case, such as solemn ceremonial and set forms of prayer and praise, and vocal and instrumental music, but rising to the throne of God without such aids by the mere force of the union of hearts which are all and always in full accord with each other and with the will of God. The Eucharist as a visible Sacrament has ceased, but its place is taken by the perpetual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and by a permanent spiritual Presence compared with which the Eucharistic Presence is but the occasional realization of an invisible Christ. And with common worship they have also (can we doubt

it?) common work; for if "they rest from their labours," yet "their works follow with them."[1] Toil is at an end, work remains; and work no longer carried on, as much of the best work on earth must be, in secret, or amongst unsympathetic surroundings, but by the whole conclave, as with one mind and one heart they do the will of God. Such work as they can do must indeed be purely spiritual, but it need not on that account lack reality or greatness. When a Christian worker is taken from us, we are accustomed to say that God has called him to labour in another part of His vineyard; that he has been moved from a lower ministry to a higher. And this way of speaking, the outcome of a Christian instinct rather than a belief derived from Scripture or tradition, is probably not far from the literal truth. It is inconceivable that the Great Master has no work for His servants who have passed through the preparatory discipline of life, during the ages which must roll by while they wait for the completion of the number of the elect. What may be the nature of this work—of these ministries—we cannot even imagine; but it is such, we may reasonably suppose, as to exercise all the energies of redeemed souls, and to fulfil some important purpose in the Divine economy. It may vary according to the powers and

[1] Apoc. xiv. 13 ἀναπαήσονται ἐκ τῶν κόπων αὐτῶν· τὰ γὰρ ἔργα αὐτῶν ἀκολουθεῖ μετ' αὐτῶν. Cf. the note in my *Apocalypse*, p. 188.

capacities of individuals, or according to the callings which they followed on earth ; the spiritual sphere may offer opportunities for pursuing, *mutatis mutandis*, the course which each soul has mainly followed here : the man of affairs, the explorer, the student, the priest, the statesman, may each find some analogous pursuit which will employ in higher fields of work the habits of thought or action acquired during their earthly life. On the other hand it will be seen, as it is not seen here, that these many occupations are the common work of all, that with this diversity of operations there is in all One Spirit, working in all for one great end, the glory of God. The fellowship of work will be realized there as it cannot be in this life. The vast and ever-growing multitude of the holy dead, gathered from every age and country, forms an army of workers who serve the same Master and are conscious of one aim.

How far the common work and worship of the saints with Christ may affect the wellbeing of souls still on earth we do not know. That we have the benefit of their intercession in a general way cannot be doubted ; but whether they are aware of circumstances which have arisen since their departure and can therefore pray for us in detail, is at least uncertain. Still more open to question is the notion that particular saints act as patrons of individuals or churches. It is at least precarious to build on so

insecure a foundation, especially if the edifice raised upon it covers a great part of the Christian life. But our refusal to follow Latin Christianity in this line of things ought not to deter us from the endeavour to realize the Communion of Saints which, we have every reason to think, exists among the faithful departed. The life beyond is so near us, so many of our friends are there already, and we ourselves are so soon to cross the border that it is of no little importance to assure ourselves that the fellowship which is begun here is continued there in the intercourse of personal converse, and of common worship and work.

2. If the faithful departed already possess a fellowship such as has been described, what, it may be asked, remains to be realized in the risen life? What can the Resurrection add to the intercourse of the blessed who are now with Christ, or to their communion in worship or in service?

Eternal life is sometimes represented in the New Testament as a present possession of believers. "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life"; or, more concisely, "he that hath the Son hath the life."[1] He already has the Spirit of Christ; "the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness."[2] This spiritual life survives the

[1] John iii. 36; 1 John v. 12. [2] Rom. viii. 10.

shock of physical death, or rather it is quickened, as we believe, by being set free from the burden of the flesh, and by a fuller recognition of the Presence of Christ. A fellowship of departed Saints with each other, a fellowship at once more spiritual than any which we know on earth and more satisfying, follows necessarily from the continuance and increase of their spiritual life. And yet their communion is not complete, for it is spiritual only. Eternal life in its fulness is not theirs as yet; they still wait, as we do, for the adoption, the redemption of the body. Life is not perfected, fellowship is not fully come, till the whole man, spirit and soul and body, is flooded with the Spirit of the risen and glorified Christ.

The Apostolic writings, which pass over the state of the Christian dead with a few brief remarks, draw for us a noble picture of the life of the risen Saints. One feature stands out clearly in all New Testament descriptions of the final state: it is a life of fellowship. As, in the words of the African baptismal creeds, eternal life comes to us "through the Holy Church,"[1] through the faith, the sacraments, the fellowship of the great Christian Society; so its fulness will be attained, not in the solitude and isolation

[1] The African interrogatory at Baptism in Cyprian's time ran: "Credis in vitam aeternam et remissionem peccatorum per sanctam Ecclesiam"? See Cyprian, *ep.* 70. 7; and cf. Aug. *serm.* ccxv.

of the individual soul, but in "the blessed company of all faithful people." The life of the Saints in light is the life of the City of God, not of the desert or the cave. Both St Paul and St John wrote for readers who were accustomed to the Greek conception of the city-state, and both claim it as one which is to find its fulfilment in the future Kingdom of God. "Our mother" is the New Jerusalem which is above; "our citizenship is in Heaven." So St Paul speaks,[1] and St John: "I will write upon him [that overcometh] the name of the city of my God"; "I saw the Holy City ... coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband."[2] The Epistle to the Hebrews, which has so much in common with the Pauline Epistles on the one hand and with the Apocalypse on the other, strikes the same note. "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are written in heaven."[3] If eternal life is ours here through fellowship with the Holy Church, it will be enjoyed there in the heavenly Church in the

[1] Gal. iv. 26; Phil. iii. 20.

[2] Apoc. iii. 12, xxi. 2.

[3] Heb. xii. 22 *πανηγύρει καὶ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρωτοτόκων*. "The word *πανήγυρις* ... was used specially of the great national assemblies and sacred games of the Greeks" (Westcott, *ad loc.*).

society of all the faithful, in the communion of saints.

Not less significant is the position and the occupation assigned to the citizens of the heavenly City. They are a Kingdom, and they are priests.[1] They belong to the greatest of all States, the Kingdom of God; on the one hand they share the protection and the prestige of the Kingdom, on the other they have their part to take in its corporate life. Each of them has his place to fill in the Divine State. There are hints of a boundless variety of service to be rendered in the common life of Heaven: talents which have been traded with here will be doubled there, doubtless that they may be still further increased by use and be turned to greater profit in the ages to come. Some will "judge angels," or "have authority over the nations"; others will doubtless serve in humbler capacities, each according to his ability;[2] all alike will work for the common good, and serve one King. Priests, too, they will all be, each of them taking his part in the liturgy of Heaven, singing the ever-new song which they learnt in the Church on earth, worshipping before the heavenly altar, serving God day and night in His temple.[3]

[1] Apoc. i. 6, v. 10: *βασιλείαν, [καὶ] ἱερεῖς*. Cf. Dr. Hort's note on 1 Pet. iii. 9.

[2] 1 Cor. vi. 3; Apoc. ii. 26. Cf. Matt. xxv. 21, 23, and Luke xii. 44.

[3] Apoc. vii. 10, xiv. 3, xv. 2 ff., xxii. 3.

There will be no divorce there, as sometimes there is here, between the secular and the sacred, the work of the heavenly State and the ministries of the heavenly Sanctuary. State and Church will be one at last in the future City of God; the Kingdom and the Priesthood will be identical in their aims and activities, since all life will be consecrated, and all work a priestly service.

Here indeed is a Communion of Saints without limit and without end. Moreover, it includes not only the countless multitude of the redeemed from amongst men,[1] but a vast concourse of those higher orders of being of whose presence and co-operation with us we are here but dimly conscious. Even on earth the Church in its highest act of worship associates itself "with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven." More than once in the Apocalypse the Angels are represented as joining with the Church in the worship of heaven. "I heard a voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands." "All the angels were standing round about the throne and about the elders and the four living creatures, and fell before the

[1] Apoc. vii. 9. The numbers given in Apoc. vii. 4, xiv. 1, represent the Church on earth at any given time in its earthly career; it is the Church in Heaven which our arithmetic fails to count.

throne on their faces and worshipped God."[1] The earthly communion of saints has grown into a universal fellowship of praise in which saints and angels, and Nature herself, at length delivered from the bondage of corruption,[2] are seen to bear its part.[3]

Lastly, into this holy fellowship God Himself deigns to enter. Even here our fellowship is not with one another only, but "with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ."[4] The Father and the Son have fellowship with the Church in her present imperfect state, through the communion of the Holy Ghost. But greater things are in store for her. "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people; and God Himself shall be with them and be their God."[5] "If a man love me," our Lord has promised, "my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him."[6] The words fulfil themselves in a measure during life, and still more, it may be believed, after death. But it remains for the risen life to consummate that which the indwelling of the Spirit has begun: to convert the abode of God in the soul into a tabernacling of the Divine Presence with redeemed humanity. God with men, God in full and endless fellowship with

[1] Apoc. v. 11, vii. 11.
[2] Rom. viii. 21.
[3] Apoc. v. 13.
[4] 1 John i. 3.
[5] Apoc. xxi. 3.
[6] John xiv. 23.

our race, drawing us all together into union with Himself, into union with one another in Him—this is the goal towards which the communion of saints is tending, and which will be reached when that which is perfect is come.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

(*A*) ON BELIEF IN THE CHURCH.

Rufinus, commenting on the Creed of Aquileia, points out (*de Symbolo*, 36) that the preposition *in* is not repeated before *sanctam ecclesiam* and the remaining clauses of the creed, and endeavours to account for this omission. "Non dixit (he writes) *in sanctam ecclesiam* . . . si enim addidisset *in* praepositionem, una cum superioribus eademque vis fieret. Nunc autem in illis quidem vocabulis ubi de divinitate ordinatur fides, *in Deo Patre* dicitur et *in Christo Filio eius* et *in Spiritu sancto*; in ceteris vero, ubi non de divinitate sed de creaturis et de mysteriis sermo est, *in* praepositio non additur ut dicatur *in sancta ecclesia*, sed sanctam ecclesiam credendam esse, non ut Deum, sed ut ecclesiam Deo congregatam." The distinction is less marked in the Roman creed, where the accusative is used throughout (*in Deum*, *in Christum*, *in Spiritum sanctum*, *sanctam ecclesiam*, etc.); but the criticism of Rufinus is, nevertheless, repeated by writers on the Roman form.[1]

Whether the original framers of the Western Creed intended to emphasize the distinction between faith in God and faith in the Church, is open to question. Eastern

[1] Cf. *e.g.* the pseudo-Augustinian sermon numbered 240 in the Benedictine appendix: "sciendum est quod ecclesiam credere, non tamen *in* ecclesiam credere, debeamus," etc.

creeds of the fourth century[1] repeat εἰς before μίαν ἐκκλησίαν, and a few copies of the Apostles' Creed repeat the preposition,[2] although others clearly follow the interpretation of Rufinus.[3]

But even if Rufinus's view is not historically or philologically sound, it raises a doctrinal question of some importance. Does faith in the Church fall under the same category as faith in God? 'I believe in God' means not only 'I believe that there is a God'; but also, 'I have affiance in Him; I place my trust in His truth and power and mercy.' Can I be said to have a like affiance in the Church? Or does faith in the Church mean no more than belief in the fact of its existence?

To believe in the fact of the Church (*credo esse ecclesiam*) is doubtless of no small importance to the Christian life, and all Christians are pledged to a faith in the Church which goes thus far at the least. He who recites the Apostles' Creed at the font or in the daily services says in effect (to use Bishop Pearson's words): "I am fully persuaded, and make a free confession of this, that Christ by the preaching of the Apostles did gather to Himself a Church . . . I am assured that there was, hath been hitherto and now is, and hereafter shall be, so long as the sun and the moon endure, a Church of Christ, one and the same."

But is this all? Let it be remembered that the fact of the Church is not merely a matter of history, but touches closely the life, and enters largely into the experience of all believers. The Church stands to us in the relation of a mother to her children, of an organism to its members, of a State to its subjects; and this relation implies a corresponding obligation on our part of filial trust, of sympathetic co-operation, of loyal obedience. I do not owe to the

[1] *E.g.* those of Cyril and Epiphanius and the Creed known as the Constantinopolitan (or 'Nicene').

[2] Hahn, pp. 47, 65, 77. [3] Hahn, pp. 79, 115.

Church the absolute devotion which I owe to God, nor do I repose in her the absolute trust which is His due; but she rightly claims from me a relative and subordinate homage, and I fall short of my duty and sacrifice my best interests if I withhold this from her. I believe, then, not only that there is a Holy Catholic Church, but I believe *in* this Church, looking to her for the spiritual gifts of which she is the appointed channel, and seeking in her that fellowship with all saints which is the earnest of the society of Heaven.

(*B*) ON THE PLACE OF *SANCTORUM COMMUNIONEM* IN THE APOSTLES' CREED.

A naïve legend of the sixth or seventh century, not content with attributing to the Apostolic college the later form of the Apostles' Creed, proceeded to allocate each of its articles to a particular Apostle. Two documents printed in the appendix to the Benedictine edition of St Augustine's sermons follow this arrangement. It is significant that the allocation is varied at the discretion of the writers; then in sermon 240 we read, "Matthaeus dixit *sanctam ecclesiam catholicam . . . sanctorum communionem*," whereas sermon 241 assigns *sanctam ecclesiam catholicam* to James the son of Alphaeus, and *sanctorum communionem* to Simon Zelotes. Another Gallican form of the Creed gives *sanctam ecclesiam* to Simon Zelotes, while the Creed of Pirminius adjudges *sanctorum communionem* to Judas the son of James.

It is evident that these allocations are purely arbitrary; but they are of interest as illustrating the process by which the Creed was divided into articles. Clearly two different views were taken as to the position of *sanctorum communionem*. According to one view, the new words formed part of the article of belief in the Church; according to the other, they either stood by themselves as a separate article, or went with

the clauses which follow. There is something to be said in favour of each of these groupings ; for connecting *sanctorum communionem* with *remissionem peccatorum* an appeal might be made to 1 John i. 7, where κοινωνία is coupled with καθαρισμός, while the sequence *sanctam ecclesiam catholicam, sanctorum communionem* is justified by the consideration that the Communion of Saints is the purpose and end for which the great Christian Society was founded. The latter connexion has the support of Bishop Pearson, and, on the whole, it seems to have the stronger claim on acceptance. In this book, accordingly, the Holy Catholic Church and the Communion of Saints have been treated as forming together one article of belief.

INDEX

Abraham's bosom, 212 ff.
Africa, baptismal creed of North, 253.
angels our fellows in worship, 256.
Apostolical succession, 46 ff.; Ap. tradition, 44 ff., 107 f.
authority, 111 ff.
Avircius, 23 n., 128, 224.

Baptism, 68, 123, 187, 189.
Benedicite, 231.
'branches' of the Church, 127 f.

canon of Scripture, 109.
catacombs, 224 f., 231.
catechumens, 168.
'catholic,' 33 ff.
catholicism, 38 ff.
ceremonial, 91 f.
'Church,' 1 f.; 'churches,' 8 f., 126 ff.
collection for the saints, 205 f.
common prayer, 195 ff.
communio, 99 f.; *sacramentorum*, 153, 186; *sanctorum*, 157 ff., 160 ff.
'communion,' 147 ff., 187; communion with God, 170 ff., 257 f.; 'spiritual,' 180.
comprecation, 236 f.
corporeity of souls, 247 f.
councils, oecumenical, 59, 79.
creeds, the Apostles' and 'Nicene,' 110 f.

'deposit,' the, 45, 108.
Diotrephes, 75.
Donatists, the, 31, 168.

'Ecclesia,' 1 f.; *eccl. discens, docens*, 106.
English Church, its present wants, 84 f.; early Reformation documents of, 164 ff., 239 n.
episcopate, rise of the, 44 f., 74 ff.
Erastianism, 136 f.
Eucharist, the, 68 ff., 88 ff., 121, 178 ff., 188 ff., 194, 225 ff.
'expectant,' the Church, 141 f.

faith in the Church, 259 ff.
fires of discipline, 217 ff.; penal, 220, 228 ff.
Founder of the Church, the, 6 f.
'free churches,' the, 16 ff.; free church Council, the, 84.

Head of the Church, 19 ff.

holiness, 23 ff.
hospitality, Christian, 207.

Incarnation, the, 176.
individualism, 119 f.
infallibility, 57 ff.
intellectual difficulties, 102 ff.
intercession, 200 ff.
intermediate state, the, 214 ff.
interpretation of Scripture, 109 ff; of 'Communion of Saints,' 161 ff.
invisible Church, the, 50 ff.
invocation of Saints, 230 ff.

Lambeth 'quadrilateral,' 84.
legendary origin of the Apostles' Creed, 261.
letters, commendatory, 23, 128.
life of the Spirit, 193 f.; life eternal, 252.
Litany of the Saints, 237 ff.
loyalty to the Church, duty of, 124, 260 f.
Lucian, 101, 156.

martyrs, cult of, 233 ff.
memento etiam in the Roman canon, 225 f.
memoriae, 233.
'militant,' the Church, 133.
missions, history of, 97 f.
monarchy, episcopal, 77 f.

Nature our fellow-worshipper, 257.
Niceta, 159 ff.
'near Christ, near the fire,' 188.
non-episcopal societies, 15 ff., 209.
notes of the Church, 11 ff.

Onesiphorus, 223.
ora pro nobis, 237 ff.

Paradise, 216 ff.
patriarchates, 80.
'penitence,' 31.
'philadelphy,' 101, 154 ff., 197.
philanthropy, 100 ff.
Plato, the Apology of, 245 ff.
pontifex maximus, 78.
prayer, forms of, 199 f.
prayers of departed for living saints, 220 ff., 243; of living for departed, 222 ff.; direct prayers for the departed removed from the English service-book, 239 f.
priesthood of the Church, the, 85 ff., 93 ff.
private judgement, 117 f.
propagation of the faith, 94 ff.

'refreshment,' 228.
reunion, 22 ff., 130 f.
revision of the Prayer-book, 115 f.
'Romish doctrine,' 240 f.
Rufinus on the Creed, 259.
rule of faith, the, 45, 107 f.

Sacraments, 66 ff.
St Paul and the Twelve, 44.
'saints,' 149 ff.; saints, the greater, 236 f.; how informed as to prayers addressed to them, 234 ff.
'*sancti*' or '*sancta*' in the Creed, 163 f.
sanctorum communionem, whether connected with *sanctam ecclesiam*, 261 f.

Sarapion, prayer-book of, 203, 226.
sleep of the departed, 215.
State and Church, 134 ff.
supremacy, Papal, 80 ff.; Royal, 135 f.
sympathy, 207 ff.

telepathy, 248.

undenominationalism, 53.
unity of Church, the, not affirmed in Western Creeds, 12.
variety of functions in the one Church, 73.
Vatican Council of 1870, the, 81.
'vicar of Christ,' 20 ff.
Vigilantius, 163 f.
Vincentian canon, 58.
visible Church, the, 50 ff.

'with the Lord,' 212 f.
work of the Church, priestly, 93 ff.; intellectual, 102 f.; spiritual, 104 f.
world, the, and the Church, 27 f., 131 ff.

GLASGOW: PRINTED AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS BY ROBERT MACLEHOSE AND CO. LTD.

BY THE REV. H. B. SWETE, D.D.

THE APPEARANCES OF OUR LORD AFTER THE PASSION. A Study in the Earliest Christian Tradition. Crown 8vo. 2s. 6d. net.

GUARDIAN.—"We rejoice that a book of such importance as this, upon a subject of the deepest interest to every Christian, should have come at the present moment from such competent hands."

THE ASCENDED CHRIST. A Study in the Earliest Christian Teaching. Crown 8vo. 2s. 6d. net.

GUARDIAN.—"This volume is a sequel and companion to *The Appearances of our Lord after the Passion.* It exhibits the same thoroughness in criticism and the same sobriety of judgment."

THE LAST DISCOURSE AND PRAYER OF OUR LORD. A Study of St. John xiv-xvii. Crown 8vo. 2s. 6d. net.

GUARDIAN.—"It would be difficult to speak too highly of the deep reverence, the true scholarship, the earnest charity of this book."

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. A Study of Primitive Christian Teaching. 8vo. 8s. 6d. net.

GUARDIAN.—"All English students of the New Testament have reason to be deeply grateful to Dr. Swete for this masterly and, we might almost venture to say, exhaustive book on a profoundly important subject."

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE ANCIENT CHURCH. A Study of Christian Teaching in the Age of the Fathers. 8vo. 8s. 6d. net.

EXPOSITORY TIMES.—"It is needless to praise the book. In all his tasks, whatever he undertakes to do, Professor Swete does better than anyone has done before him."

LONDON: MACMILLAN AND CO., LTD.

BY THE REV. H. B. SWETE, D.D.

THE APOCALYPSE OF ST. JOHN. The Greek Text, with Introduction, Notes and Indices. Third edition. 8vo. 15s.

GUARDIAN.—"A commentary on the Book of Revelation which is at once of the first rank and yet not over the head of any one who is fairly acquainted with the Greek of the New Testament."

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK. The Greek Text. With Introduction and Notes. Third edition. 8vo. 15s.

CRITICAL REVIEW.—"Undoubtedly the best English commentary we possess on Mark."

THE AKHMÎM FRAGMENT OF THE APOCRYPHAL GOSPEL OF ST. PETER. 8vo. 5s. net.

CRITICAL REVIEW.—"The text of the Petrine fragment is accompanied by admirable notes which give light on many passages. A Translation is also furnished, and an Introduction of forty-seven pages deals in an interesting and instructive way with a variety of matters connected with the find."

Edited by the Rev. H. B. SWETE, D.D.

ESSAYS ON SOME THEOLOGICAL QUESTIONS OF THE DAY. By Members of the University of Cambridge. 8vo. 12s. net.

GUARDIAN.—"The volume is one which must engage the attention of all who are interested in theological speculation in English-speaking countries."

ESSAYS ON SOME BIBLICAL QUESTIONS OF THE DAY. By Members of the University of Cambridge. 8vo. 12s. net.

ATHENÆUM.—"This is a remarkable book, and ought to attract the attention of all who are interested in the Bible."

ESSAYS ON THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE CHURCH AND THE MINISTRY. By Various Writers. 8vo. [*In the press.*

LONDON: MACMILLAN AND CO., LTD.

DATE DUE

DEMCO 38-297

BT 11499
993 Swete
S975 The Holy Catholic church: the communion of saints

BT 11499
993
S975

Swete
The Holy Catholic church: the communion of saints

DEMCO